

lang="en">

Majin Tenseiki - WN Chapter 01-13

Table of Contents

1. [Chapter 01: The Day a Majin was Born](#)
2. [Chapter 02: The Day the Majin Awoke](#)
3. [Chapter 03: The Day the Majin Reminisces](#)
4. [Chapter 04: The Day the Majin Regrets](#)
5. [Chapter 05: The Day the Majin Mourns](#)
6. [Chapter 06: Bearer of Black Flame: the Final Emperor](#)
7. [Chapter 07: Those Who Go Against the Flow of the World \[1/2\]](#)
8. [Chapter 08: Those Who Go Against the Flow of the World \[2/2\]](#)
9. [Chapter 09: The Sheer Cliff's War Proposal](#)
10. [Chapter 10: Footsteps of Evil Intent](#)
11. [Chapter 11: The Bearer of Truth \[1/2\]](#)
12. [Chapter 12: The Bearer of Truth \[2/2\]](#)
13. [Chapter 13: An Angel's Pride](#)

Chapter 01: The Day a Majin was Born

I know it's an unusual subject to bring up, but isn't there usually a death flag?

Some of the best examples are: [Leave this place to me and go on ahead! I'll definitely catch up with you!], or [After the war is over, I'm getting married...].

There are others that follow a similar pattern, but whichever way you say it, the speaker is bound to die after they speak those kind of lines.

But you know, I believe that the most tragic character is the one who suddenly dies without raising a death flag.

——Because that character is me.



I somewhat remember crawling into my bed and closing my eyes while surrounded by thoughts like [Wouldn't it be nice if tomorrow was a fun day...].



When I opened my eyes again, a man wearing a helmet and armor that resembled an oni came into view.

“Die and disappear from this world you monster!” He screamed with enough vigor to burst my eardrums.

I was surprisingly unafraid, which was probably because I didn't know what was going on.

By the time I caught up, the sword that had been swung powerfully downwards was buried in my shoulder. It seemed likely that the blade sunk far enough to reach my heart.

Ahh...this guy has died for sure...as if it was someone else's problem, words like

this floated in my mind.

Around this time, from within my body there was a tremendous impulse along the lines of: *If it's like this, you might as well end it on a grandiose note...*

That is why, following this impulse, I cried out.

“Yaaaahoooooooooo!”

Even if I was confused, it was a terrible final line, from now on saying such things is prohibited.



The next time I open my eyes, for some reason I see a beam of blueish white light.

——Eh? A beam?

“If only you were gone!! ——Disappear!! You monster!!” A little ways off, while breathing weakly, a man in light armor cried out.

Ah, hey, the beam is in the way, I can't see.

Bright. Too bright. Gradually the beam draws near and seems to hit me right in the face.

As I mentioned the last time, I wasn't afraid because I didn't understand what was going on.

Ahh...this guy is going to die here, huh...as if it was someone else's problem, I

thought——

“——H-hey! W-waittttt!!!”

——I managed to cry out.



The next time I open my eyes, for some reason I see a fist approaching.

“I’ll be the one to defeat you! Return to the earth, you monster——”

“——Like hell!! Ugh! Goho! Goho!”

Although I managed to interrupt my opponents line, it was no good.

It seems to have sunk in, that fist.

Of course, it really, truly hurts. It probably went straight through my abdomen.
Gofugofu...I’m coughing quite violently.

By the third time it seems I’ve finally caught up to the situation.

I think my consciousness has finally returned completely.



——Still, the previous two were better. Those ones were peaceful.

The first time when I was instantly killed by having my heart split in two, the second time being covered in light and obliterated while hearing a somewhat pleasant [Jyuu] sound.

But, the third death is unacceptable.

Anyways, it really hurts. Compared to my previous lightheartedness, I was in a cold sweat and my hair was standing on end. There was a hot, unfamiliar feeling like the spread of disease from my abdomen to the rest of my body.

The most unacceptable thing was the vigor of a foreign thing squirming around in my insides. It was disgusting.

Slowly the pain began to fade, this time around I had a clear head.

——Haa....

Instead of a clear head it could be said that I can comprehend enough to fly into a rage. Unfortunately it seems that the fist has completely disappeared into my stomach. Giving up seems an attractive option.

I wonder why it is I'm about to die?

Why did I die those two times and why do I have to die again?

Alas...my eyelids are closing on their own.

——When I open my eyes will another death be waiting for me?



I open my eyes.

To be honest, I'm not even sure how many times it's been.

"N-noooooooooo——!!"

First of all I cried. Half was out of desperation. Up until now, how many times have I died?

“■■■ ! ”

Although, the situation this time appears to be different.

——eh? Is it alright if I don't die?

I'm grateful and somewhat happy, understanding nothing of the current situation, I gave myself up to powerful emotions.

“Uuu.....ugu....uuuee....”

If you were to ask me, my crying appearance must have been unsightly.

I'm sure the sight of my face covered in tears and snot, and the sounds of my loud sniffing were difficult to watch.

After crying for awhile, I raised my head and took the time to confirm the current situation. Somehow it's really hard to move, but let's pay that no mind. It's not as if I can't move.

Like this, while looking around the room my eyes suddenly reflected——a person's face.

“■■■、■■.....”

A person. It's a person. A person who may have come to attack me.

Their ominous red eye seemed to pierce right through me, for some reason, that person's mouth opened and a voice came forth.

But, as for the words spoken, I couldn't comprehend them. I could vaguely understand that they were speaking to me.

This person's face was beautiful. Have I ever seen someone this incredibly beautiful I wonder? A typical cool beauty.

Unnatural pure white skin as translucent and smooth as porcelain, glossy, pure black hair. When you compared the two colors it created a strong contrast.

Long and slender arms and legs, it seemed that if I made the mistake of reaching a hand out to her, my roughness would conflict with her sensuality.

Considering the result of my original observation, I will refer to this person as [her].

For the time being, as I absolutely cannot understand the language, let's try mimicking the action at least.

While thinking this I open my mouth. The beautiful woman is in front of me. Let's say something using as much charm as I can muster. I breath in deeply from my nose all the way to my diaphragm.

"Fufufufaa!"

A spirited voice randomly came out.

How weird. I was trying to say [The moon tonight is really beautiful] in a refreshing voice. It got cut off short. To begin with, I didn't even manage to form words.

I'll try again to repair the mood.

“Fufuaa! ——Fufuu!”

What’s this guy laughing at. It feels weird.

While in front of this beauty I’m laughing strangely. The line of communication from my mouth to my head seems to have been severed.

.....

——What’s the meaning of this?

I can’t form words.

Knowing this I take five seconds to get a sense as to the situation I have been put in. I get an unsettling feeling as I raise my arm. ——It’s heavy. And, as soon as I look at it, I understand.

My arm is frail, and has the appearance of a baby’s.

A feeble arm that, if gripped, would easily be crushed.

What is this? Is this really my arm?

Contrary to the words spoken in my head, my reasoning urges me to understand.

A hand like a baby, also, a mouth and voice that fail to follow my own will.

“■■■■?” While sitting beside me and watching, the woman says something with a troubled expression.

This would be the situation where I'd like to properly reply but...

“——Fuaan!”

What's this guy saying?

——I'm at my limit.

Wait, wait, at the very beginning, didn't I talk?

I wonder if that first time was a once in a lifetime miracle?

——If that's the case, then use it more meaningfully!it's too late to say that now, right?

In my heart I'd love to be able to express myself in a cheerful voice, but for the time being I'm assaulted by feelings of uselessness at my inability to speak.

A baby.

Yes, a baby.

My body is that of a baby.

I felt through my body a strange despondency as I considered this fact. Then, I was surprised with a floating feeling.

My vision suddenly shifted.

Up until now, I have been held by [her]; the woman I see beside me.

She stood up and seems to be taking me somewhere.

I become a little anxious, but from now on I try and steer my mind towards staying relieved.

——If it's okay for me not to die, then anything is fine.

I'll turn my thoughts around and be happy.

This time only, I'll give praise to my mental fortitude.



After some time passed, I managed to calm down.

Think, focus. I haven't lost my reasoning faculties.

A baby's body with a mature mind is bewildering, and because my mind is mature I can have a lot of complaints about the matter.

There's definitely something better than being sucked into a mental maze while thinking too deeply about this.

You can't understand the things you don't understand. ——Get serious, me.

Ten minutes pass with me cradled in her arms.

I can catch sight of a changing landscape of nothing but trees.

Blue. Azure. Dark.

The air is humid.



After around ten minutes have passed the scenery I can see has completely changed.

A solemn castle.

The plain wall is a little dirty, from the front it has a very old fashioned style.

Also, here and there are shiny crystals that catch and reflect the sun's rays with a clear radiance. It's very beautiful.

A severely tall structure, to give an example it's like a [Needle Castle].

It looks as if long, convex buildings are jumbled closely together.

The castle gives off a fantastical feeling, it makes my heartbeat flutter in my chest.

“■■■”

She says aloud.

Sorry, I can't understand whatever it is you're saying.

But, I'm grateful for her gentle tone of voice.

Up until now it's been nothing but abuse, and getting killed, running into spiteful guys, and getting killed; I was stuck in that sort of endless cycle. So I'm satisfied just by seeing her concerned expression.

While I was thinking this I was struck by a strong desire to sleep. The whisper of drowsiness.

The combination of being embraced in her arms and the rocking motion as she walked was enough, in just a few seconds, against my will, my eyelids began to droop.

To be honest, I'm afraid of going to sleep.

I understand that, as I am currently a baby, sleep is necessary.

However, even still, just awhile ago whenever I woke up I was killed——I thought I was an existence that lived to repeat this pattern.

The terror of going to sleep.

Now, even as my consciousness fades, when I wake up will I be faced with an unreasonable death? ——Was what I was wondering.

Ahh, but it's no good; my resistance is weakening.

Sleepiness is a veteran. A baby can't win against it.

Natural human needs banzai!

With my final struggle and resolution, before my consciousness had totally faded, I felt in my heart what my mouth couldn't say:

I don't care what happens anymore— —



The next time I open my eyes I carefully survey my surroundings: I don't want to die.

My survey results show that I have been put to sleep surrounded by a giant bed.

Actually, to put it into context, I'm lying on top of a giant bed.

When I first looked around [her] face appeared in my line of sight: the woman who was holding me when I fell asleep. She was holding a massive book in one hand, and made a [Nuu...] sound once she confirmed that I was awake. The book went [bara bara] as she turned its pages.

“Wh..o...a...re...yo...u?”

What? — —Whoa!

— —Whooooaaa!! Words I can understand!

Is that massive book like a translation dictionary I wonder?

In any case, hearing words I can understand is great.

— —Ah.

“.....”

...but you know?

——Even if you ask me, I don't have the speaking ability to answer...!! Did you happen to forget the weird laughter from before!?

Is this person a little strange in the head? ——Idiot, stop it, this person is trying to speak to you.

Be that as it may, it's a fact that I am completely unable to exchange words with her.

While considering this, she tries again,

“I...apolo...gize...some...one....a..ble....to speak....a few....words...coming...”

Furrowing her eyebrows, she ran her eyes over the tightly gripped book and spoke.

I guess she means that someone who can somewhat understand baby talk, or someone who can better speak my language, is coming.

——Time to face my fate.

From now on, I'll one-sidedly gather information.

I became somewhat happy, and with my body suddenly full of energy rolled around atop the bed.

Watching me energetically roll around on the bed, the woman showed a happy smile.

Radiating beauty, it was a gentle smile. Forgiving everything, concealing everything: a devilish smile.

Just now, I fell for her charm.

—Anyways, let's look forward to the person she mentioned.

Until then let's control get started on controlling this body, so that I can express with movement what I can't express with words, let's practice.

—Yeah, let's do that.



The mentioned person, soon afterwards appeared before me.

Just like the woman's appearance—strangely pure white skin, pure black hair, and deep red eyes.

At one glance it was obvious this person was a man.

In place of those powerful protuberances were muscles, his male-ness was assured.

"Nice to meet you. How do you feel?"

The first conversation in my memory.

Polite wording.

I accepted that short phrase, and on the top of the bed rolled my body once towards the right.

—Fufufu, this is one of the abilities I acquired during this short amount of time.

If I roll once to the right: Yes! If I roll once to the left: No! —It's perfect!

——Of course it's not.

But this was all I was able to think of...! Please! Somehow understand what I'm trying to say intelligent-looking onii-san!

"Oh? ——Ah, you are unable to speak. I apologize; I am unused to thinking from a baby's point of view and forgot."

I again rolled once to the right.

"——Rolling to the right is yes...I suppose?"

——How diligent

What an earnest onii-san.

You can call it genius.

The perspective that he's just a good guesser was only considered for a moment.

——Okay, if I roll to the right one more time it'll be perfect.

"Haha, just as I thought. I understand. ——Still, it must be irritating to have such clear understanding but be unable to speak. Are all babies like this I wonder?" The onii-san said while smiling.

"Well, that's enough of that. First I will give introductions. My name is Alfred. Alfred Satana. The girl who picked you up is Lilian Satana. According to her, you fell nearby our castle.

"——■■■■、■■"

"■■。■■■■"

After informing me of this, Alfred then began speaking in a different language with Lilian.

——Nevertheless, for what reason would I have fallen here?

.....

One more thing caught my attention: the word [name].

——I don't know my own name.

I feel that I had one.

Was my memory degraded from when I died over and over again?

The more I try to remember, the more obvious the void in my memory becomes.

There was definitely a time where I lived somewhere else other than here. I definitely have that feeling.

——Even so, I can't remember.

The worthless information of the situations where I died dimly remain in my mind.

“——And that's why, Lilian could not leave you alone and ignore you so she brought you home.”

My name, what is it...

——I have a feeling I absolutely can't remember it.

It doesn't feel like [I can't remember] or [I forgot].

[Nonexistent].

“——It seems to have been a painful experience, are you alright? ——Be at ease. We will not abandon you since we have taken you in. We will properly help you grow up.”

I'm grateful.

I feel like I was touched by this sort of human conscience a long time ago.

“For the time being, for the sake of conversation, I will teach you how to speak. I will also feed you.”

I am grateful. ——Truly, very grateful.

“——Come now, you have become tired I am sure. You look very tired. Do not fret, you may rest now.”

Alfred showed me a gentle smile.

Being drawn into his smile I also wrinkled my face into a smile and closed my eyes.

I tried to mutter something I had once spoken from another bed; this time from the bottom of my heart I felt——

[Wouldn't it be nice if tomorrow was a fun day— —]

While I fell asleep those words filled my heart.

Chapter 02: The Day the Majin Awoke

One week has passed since Lilian picked me up.

A week that passed like a raging wave. A wave so intense I could weep.

Alfred came practically every day that week to teach me language. But Alfred is Alfred and can only manage what he can manage, so he left Lilian in charge of taking care of me.

Being nursed by a beauty. There's nothing that could make me happier.

When she changes me I'm given a legitimate chance to touch her devilishly charming body. Her soft, glossy black hair would stick to her smooth skin. She put on display her full breasts and slender frame, and a narrow back that descended into a tight, shapely bottom.

Ahh, how wonderful, how fun, this is the best——

——I'm lying.

I'll say it once more: that joyful description is an illusion.

The week that passed like a violent, raging wave was Lilian's fault.

“■■■.....”

“Uuu...uuu....uuee....”

At the sound of Lilian's voice I began to cry.

——Why is that you ask?

“■■、■■■.....”

Because, using both hands, Lilian held out a dripping slab of [raw meat] for me. In the end she pushed that strangely flopping piece of meat forcibly against my mouth.

——Hey! Stop it!! Who’s going to eat that!?

S-save me Alfred onii-san.!!

A squishy gross feeling was covering my mouth.

Without paying attention to my refusal of that red, raw flesh, Lilian was determined to forcibly make me eat.

I’m glad you’re concerned, but, after all, I can’t eat it!!

“.....?”

Even if you tilt your head in an adorable display of concern I won’t eat it!! Looking sad is not going to work either!!

——First of all can’t you at least cook it so that it’s sterilized?

I’m a baby you know? My lack of resistance is no joke. ——As I fear, Lilian might be a little off in the head.

——Hey now, crying while stuffing your cheeks with raw meat is painting a really surreal picture. So please stop.

She seems to be the type to not show her emotions on her face.

Of course I’ve seen her look worried and her bright smile, but if you compare the variety to Alfred’s expressions it’s really lacking.

I'm held near her face every day so I should know, but maybe that's my own arrogant assumption.

I turn my gaze from the Lilian with her cheeks stuffed with raw meat and look at the now familiar ceiling.

As I do I hear the door open with a clank.

——He's here! My savior!!

"Hahaha, was Lilian trying to force you to eat raw meat again?"

It's not something to laugh about Alfred onii-san.

While smiling happily Alfred brings a nearby chair over and sets it down next to Lilian before taking a seat.

"I thought it might be something a baby would be unable to eat, so I brought some food babies can eat with me."

After he says that Alfred opens his hand and shows me several small fruits.

They seem to be fruit from different trees but they give off a poisonous vibe. Blue, black, purple.....purple?

"Ah, you look somewhat concerned. Do not fret! The poison has been properly removed."

Hm? ——Poison? You did say poison, didn't you? So that means that there

was originally poison in them, right?

“.....”

I return his words with an incredibly grim face. But it doesn't seem to have been received. Alfred is smiling with his whole face. Haha... Damn you. I've now seen the smile of the Devil.

....well, you see, it seems that I'm not particularly hungry at the moment. I'll eat those later. Much later. ...yeah.

While I was thinking this I again turned my gaze towards Alfred and found an unusual object was now in his hands.

It was a bottle. A poison-like, purple fluid-filled, bottle.

— — Alfred-san? What's that bottle that you brought with those fruits?

— — That isn't, by any chance, the antidote?

....Did you really remove the poison from this stuff!?

With more energy than usual, out of true desperation, I rolled left three times. No. No. No.

With a ghastly vigor I communicated my true feelings of: absolutely not.

“Really? Then later I will have Lilian feed it to you.”

No!! Absolutely not!! That's just raising my death flag, isn't it!?

——As I thought. I'm going to be force fed. Haha...it's like I've become my own, personal prophet. While I was deciding on a cool pose that would go well with that statement, Alfred continued speaking.

“Oh, yes, today I am going to introduce you to the family.”

——Family?

At the sound of those words a question mark seems to float up, but it is soon cancelled and dispersed. The word [family] that Alfred used is almost immediately given a form as they enter my line of sight.

From outside my room I can hear a group of people loudly talking amongst themselves.

Then——

“■■■!”

“■■!!”

“■■、■■■■”

——U-uwah....

A bunch of them have entered the room.

Each and everyone, just like Alfred and Lilian, have porcelain white skin, and sparkling red eyes.

“Sorry about all the fuss. Babies are rare around here so everyone gathered to take a look.”

Oho....

...But now that I think about it, something in what Alfred just said caught my attention.

—[Rare].

Specifically: [Babies are rare].

“Actually, most of us have never seen a baby. Our race has incredibly low reproductive abilities so babies are rarely born. But, to make up for that, we live very long lives. ...I wonder when was the last time a baby of our race was born?”

O-kay. Sounds good.

—yes?

“In any case, that is why, in normal cases, when a child of our same race is born information would usually spread quickly. It is somewhat of a big deal. But, it does not seem that you were born from someone in our community.”

Oh dear. That seems to be an unusual situation. I thought to myself, as if it was someone else’s situation, and nodded.

—But this conversation is definitely about me, isn’t it?

“You appear to be identical to our race: the Majin. But as to where you came from we have been completely unable to figure out.” Alfred stated with a bitter smile.

I suddenly really want to borrow a mirror somehow.

That reminds me, up until now I haven't really been interested in my appearance.

"But you know, even if you are a child of unknown origins, to us you are family. Your origins are not at all an issue. The rest of the family cannot wait to be able to speak with you."

From nearby Alfred I can see around ten Majin who looked really interested in my person.

I was somewhat taken aback by all this, but Alfred's words made sense, so I gained a new desire to learn their language.

After that Alfred sent the rest of the Majin back and the room was again just Lilian, Alfred, and I.

"We will have a more difficult discussion when you are a bit older. Until then we will protect you so just relax and let us raise you."

As expected of Alfred. When he speaks to you with that beautiful face and love-filled expressions, even though he's a man, you could find yourself becoming a prisoner of his words.

If you keep repeating those words that's just what I'll have to do. Just watch me grow up peacefully.

Hehehe, first up is sleeping!

Ah...but please give me a break with the raw meat, ok?



One month has passed.

The time has passed surprisingly slowly.

Sleeping, eating, and sleeping again. Every once and awhile having raw meat forced on me and refusing.

Around the time I'd become very used to Lilian's presence I became able to walk under my own power.

I couldn't believe how quickly I was growing up.

From being able to crawl to being able to walk took me only three days; even I was afraid of the depths of my genius.

In the language department, because of Alfred's super translation ability I was able to understand the main points.

But my biggest assistance with understanding the language was from quickly absorbing what was spoken around me by the Majin whose words I couldn't understand, namely everyone besides Alfred and Lilian.

My gait was a bit unsteady, but I had gained the ability and freedom to wander about the solemn castle.

"[Sare] eats meat?"

"He seems to resist it with all of his might."

—Ahh...I bet they heard about that from Lilian.

When Lilian offers me raw meat, I earnestly do as they just said.

By the way [Sare] is my name, the Majin spent time deciding it and gave it to me.

My last name is the same as Alfred and Lilian's: Satana. So altogether it's [Sare Satana]. It seems to flow really well and I've become quite fond of it.

"It's good when you cook it." (Sare)

"It's better raw." (Lilian)

—So argues the owner of that unfavorable opinion while stuffing her cheeks with raw meat.

While giving a sidelong glance towards Lilian I let myself down from the bed.

On unsteady feet I headed towards the room's mirror and assessed my own reflection.

As Alfred said, my appearance is near to their own.

Not just white, but porcelain-like skin, red eyes like fresh blood, and black hair like the night of a new moon. The light and darkness were distinct, and the contrast made my complexion seem to glow.

"I'm going to go to Alfred's place for a bit Lilian."

"Nn, off you go."

During our exchange I continued to observe my appearance and confirmed its validity while Lilian continued to stuff her mouth full of raw meat, only pausing to briefly reply to me.

Alfred's room is in the highest level of the castle.

The climb up the stairs is intense, but I do my best while thinking of it as training.



I somehow manage to make the climb to Alfred's room, when I open the door I see Alfred reading a book.

When Alfred notices me he shows a kind smile.

“Hello there Sare. I see you have become able to climb up here on your own.”

“But it’s still hard.”

“You are growing up so quickly. ——Now then, come and have a seat.” Alfred said while pointing at a round table in the corner of the room.

Facing me like a wall were rows of giant bookcases. Without a single empty crevice the bookshelves were crammed full with books; it was a tantalizing room for the curious.

“Now, what shall we discuss today...”

“Can I decide what we talk about? It’ll help me tie together what I’ve learned.”

“That is true; let us do that.”

“Then, first let’s start with——”

My head was crowded with a bunch of questions, so I voiced one of them.

“Where are we?”

“The country of the Majins: [Irudoe Empire]. But rather than a country, it is more accurate to refer to us as a settlement.”

“——Settlement?”

“The population of Majins this country once had have declined, so we are now just this settlement. In the past we had many brethren at our borders. Now the whole of the Irudoe nation are the hundred or so of us who live in this castle. That is why it does not seem right to call this place a country. We are not equal to foreign nations after all.”

With a sad smile Alfred continued:

“Anyways, this castle— — [Sanctos Castle] is a remnant of the time when the Irudoe Empire was well known. The Majin race now resides here.”

“By the way, why did the Majin decline?”

“When the [Uura Mitos], or Pure race, invaded— —the people living on the border were killed.”

From my heart I intuitively felt something at the words Alfred so easily spoke.

These words were heavy.

I was filled with nothing but questions.

“Why did they invade...?”

“Because they feared the Majin race. It has been that way since long ago. — —There was also jealousy. Even among the other powerful races in this world, the Majin is an existence possessing a powerful capability to inflict [violence]. Besides that there are many more reasons I could explain to you at length— —but let us hold off on that for today.” With that Alfred redirects the conversation.

“Since long ago the Majin race has conflicted with the Pure race, but at one time we opted for the path of peace. In the beginning we resisted with a do-or-die attitude. [The ones who cast the first stones were you!] or so they said. But along the way we realized how unproductive that behavior was.”

Alfred’s troubled smile was complicated, but he continued.

“This world’s standard race, the Pure race, when compared to the Majin race’s

population, is much larger. They give birth to many new families, while our weak reproductive ability cannot keep up. Anyone can predict what would happen if we faced them with our numbers. — — That's why we compromised and chose the peaceful path."

Alfred recited this with his pained smile and somehow seemed really lonely.

"But, their traitorous form was revealed when they mounted a large-scale invasion awhile ago. We had no intention of fighting though.Our hopes to quietly live in peace were not able to be granted."

"The survivors of the Majin race are..."

"I told you before, all the Majin live in this castle. But, even though our ancestors may get angry, I somewhat understand the Pure race's complaints. Seeing a Majin nearby you never know when you will be in sudden danger."

Alfred revealed with a bright smile and fiery eyes.

"Right now the Majins numbers are declining, and the Pure race is not bothering us. We have long lives, and as I said before we have practically no reproductive ability, even if we stop declining it is not like we will grow in numbers. That is why— — we are not completely safe."

"...Alfred— — are you okay with that?" I suddenly asked by accident.

"Okay with it?"

"You don't ever think of revenge, or consider them the enemy of your brethren or anything?"

"If you look at it realistically, we no longer possess the power to consider such things. Also— —"

Alfred paused for a moment and took a deep breath before he continued.

“— —[It’s fine]. Because I have no desire to see everyone fighting. Sare, that is why you should not let it bother you either.”

Even if he says so, I’m unable to swallow the story Alfred told me.

I understand the purpose and meaning of it, but I couldn’t connect with such self-centered reasoning.

If someone with no inherent bias came to this conclusion then it suggested that this story was filled with unreasonable statements.

Also coincidentally, Alfred’s [attachment to living] looks weak and pulls at my heart.

I understand being tired of fighting. No, lemme correct that: I have the feeling that I understand. As someone not directly involved I can’t make that kind of statement.

But, as someone who personally experienced unreasonable deaths over and over again, there’s a part of it I understand.

The [being attached to life] part.

“Let us end this dark discussion here.” Alfred said after a loud clap of his hands.

“At this point in time, I feel that we are all living for the purpose of watching over Sare as he grows up. It is very enjoyable watching over you. The act of raising a baby is something we are growing accustomed to, and since we only have old books for reference we are awkward at it— —”

Having to look at Alfred's self-derisive smile, I interrupt with words of my own.

“— —Thank you. Everyone has my thanks. For welcoming me into the family. And even though it's only been one month, thank you for raising me.”

“Haha, receiving those words makes me very happy. Do not fret, until Sare is able to live on his own we will protect you.”

— —Please stop with that sort of thing. It's almost like a death flag.

I think to myself using words from the depths of my broken memory.

“Now— —it is a bit early, but I shall teach you the way to use a Majin's powers. As I told you in the conversation just now, we tend to make enemies of the Pure race, so it is good if we have enough power to protect ourselves. Within you also rests power, I would like to instruct you on its use ahead of time.” While saying this Alfred rose to his feet.

It seems like we are changing locations.

With my unsteady gait I followed Alfred from behind.



Following Alfred's lead we managed to arrive at the basement of Sanctos Castle.

Similar to Alfred's massive room filled with bookshelves, it was a huge space similar to a reception hall.

At some point, not just Lilian but other Majins had filled the space with eyes full of anticipation as they waited for my arrival.

— — Everyone's got a lot of spare time, huh...

As if hearing my thoughts, Alfred admonished the other Majin as he smiled and scratched his head thoughtfully. "Really, putting your jobs off like this..."

"Everyone is curious about Sare." Lilian spoke to excuse the other Majins.

"We are a hopeless family, are we not. Well, I understand your feelings so today will be a special occasion."

At Alfred's words the other Majins answered "O~k~" with apparent sincerity.

"Now then, today's lesson is on a Majin's inherent power. There are other abilities that are not exclusive to Majins that you can learn, but only this power is unique to Majins. For that reason I shall teach it to you first." After saying this Alfred leaned over and turned his face towards me.

"It is a unique ability among the races. It can be said that it is one of the main reasons that the Pure race fears us."

Due to the surprisingly long introduction I can deduce that it is a pretty important power.

Despite the sluggishness I was feeling in my baby body, in order to answer Alfred's seriousness, I braced myself.

I took a deep breath.

"— — Ok, I understand Alfred. Please teach it to me."

Alfred nodded at my words.

Thereafter Alfred covered his eyes with his hand for a moment before removing it, and turned both eyes towards me.

What happened?

I immediately noticed the change.

In the center of Alfred's pupil a complex [pattern] appeared.

There were numerous characters that I couldn't understand in it, but in the center was a six-pointed star.

If I were to comment honestly, I'd say that it was really mysterious.

The pupil in the center of his blood-red eyes was shining brilliantly.

"The eye of destruction, called [Gram Istoora]."

I suddenly noticed that the other Majin surrounding us were also displaying the same strangely-patterned eyes.

That Lilian is included as well of course.

The sight of those hundred odd Majin all turning to look at me with their glowing red eyes was a grand enough spectacle to make my heart skip a beat.

"I am somewhat jumping into an explanation here, but in this world there are powers that follow reason and common sense known as [Technique Formulas]. A [Formula] is used by the different types of powers in this world, and [Techniques] are fueled with the power of those different formulas, which in turn cause various phenomena and changes to appear."

Alfred suddenly holds out one of his fingers and from the fingertip a small ball of light appears. A small ball with the brilliance of a miniature sun.

“Those with Majin powers use the [Majin Technique Formulas], those with Heaven powers use the [Heaven Technique Formulas], and those who can see spirits can use the [Spirit Technique Formulas]. Because of this the types are really varied. But, whichever of those technique formulas you choose to learn, you will attain the ability to cause unique phenomena and changes in this world.”

Just by listening I can tell that [Technique Formulas] have a lot of variety. It seem there are three of them.

“Now then, by looking at those using [Gram Istoora] you can follow the previous line of logic that as it is a naturally found phenomena, a power that can only be handled by Majins, it is referred to as a [Natural Technique]. It is something that dwells in the eyes of the Majins from birth.”

Or so Alfred amended.

“If I were to put it simply— —the ability that the [Gram Istoora] technique possesses is that of [destruction]. It is a [destruction] near the level of what you would imagine destruction to be. It seems obvious, but you should understand that the scope and range is quite broad. — —Rather than just telling you, I suppose giving you a visual example would be more efficient.”

After saying this, Alfred turned his gaze from towards the area behind me and fired the small ball of light with his words:

“——[Be broken].”

It was a short, fleeting phrase filled with malice.

Suddenly a piercing sound assaulted my ears from somewhere behind me.

Following the noise I turned my gaze to the floor behind me in the large reception hall, Alfred's gaze was levelled at a part of the floor where a hole had been gouged out.

The floor, which I had once heard was made out of marble, had been broken up into pieces, and there was a large gaping hole in it about the same size as my body.

——Nononono.

——Wait, wait.

——Give me a moment.

——Isn't that a little over the top?

Although I felt curiosity at the sight of it, it was also a little bit scary.

As Alfred had mentioned previously on how the Pure race fears us, for a moment even I could sympathize.

——If my opponent had that sort of power...

I got a chill down my spine.

There was an uncomfortable and unusual feeling of wrongness accompanied by a cold sweat that ran down my back and stuck to my clothes.

“The most important thing is to focus your gaze on your target. After that, you

use a voice full of what you would call [malice] and [ill will] to call it forth——and it becomes something like that.” Alfred said the last part while gesturing towards the gouged out surface of the floor.

“Of course the [Gram Istoora] has its risks as well. Naturally your body suffers exhaustion from excessive use.”

If all you have to pay for using such a skill is physical exhaustion then it’s a cheap price to pay.

“There is one more. It is a [symptom] which you must never forget about, got it? You must never forget this.” Alfred continued.

I gulped and waited.

“If you use [Gram Istoora] to the point of physical exhaustion and continue to use it you will begin to suffer from [tears of blood]. That is the sign that you have hit the limit of using the eye of destruction. If you get to the point where you are suffering from [tears of blood] then you must absolutely stop using the eye of destruction.”

“If you happen to continue using it——what happens?”



“——you’ll die.”



That is definitely not a cheap price to pay.

“Shortly after the tears of blood have ended you will die from blood loss.”

That paints a freaking scary mental image...!!

“At the time when the tears of blood begin to flow from your eyes you should immediately stop using the [eye of destruction] to allow your eyes rest. That is why you should absolutely stop using the [eye of destruction] if you are experiencing tears of blood. This is one of the things a Majin should absolutely always remember. — —Also, the [eye of destruction] has a second risk.”

“A second risk?”

“Right. I told you that the Majins are feared because of their eyes, correct? — —That is why, when an opponent who knows of the Majins abilities faces one in a fight they will always immediately aim to crush their eyes.”

It has turned into an unexpectedly intense discussion.

Considering how often they’ve been in conflict with the Pure race it isn’t exactly an unexpected discussion, is it?

After all, it’s a given that the [Gram Istoor], in terms of battle efficiency, is at the top of the list of convenient weapons.

Also, the word [conflict] seems to be something that is always attached to a power called the eye of destruction.

When I consider both of the risks together I feel a shiver run through my body.

“That is why, if Sare finds himself in the Pure race’s territory, he must never reveal or use this power recklessly. At least if he desires to live in peace.”

That’s a given. If it’s found out then it could lead straight to my death.

Anyways, I wonder if there’ll ever be a moment where I’d find myself in the

Pure race's territory.

If I've properly digested all the information up until now, the Pure race would always make any Majins they encounter their enemies. The fact that this is likely the same even today has been engraved in my mind.

I don't really want to think about it.

I don't want to die again.

Constantly running into things that bear you nothing but ill will is not fun.

Even though I've often experienced those sort of events, I have no desire to become used to them.

If I were to become any more used to it I feel that I might lose something important.

"Let us leave it at that for today. If I properly think about it, Sare is still just a baby. I just really wanted you to know about it— —that is, about the [eye of destruction]."

"Yeah, I'm glad you told me about it ahead of time."

If, in the distant future, I had a strange and unbelievable power and it was allowed to run wild, it would be nothing to laugh about.

My self-awareness as a Majin is strong, so I make sure Alfred sees me nod emphatically.

There is too much I don't understand about this world.

I'm already quite aware that I have been given a new life.

— —There has been joy, but it's also been a little lonely.

—A second life?

—As if.

I'd say I'm at the tenth life or so. Or at least, I've died that many times.

Also, I have a hard time remembering anything specific about that life I seemed to be living in the beginning.

—I'll stop clinging to the past.

—If I want to get anything done in this life I need to look forwards.

—That way holds the highest likelihood of being interesting.

But in forcing myself not to think about the past an uncomfortable feeling begins to rise from the pit of my stomach and hang in the air.

Holding those feelings in my chest, I give myself up to pangs of uneasiness.

(TN: [Technique Styles] were amended to [Technique Formulas], or just "techniques" for better clarity going forward.)

Chapter 03: The Day the Majin Reminisces

I take back my previous remarks.

Time has passed much more quickly than I could imagine.

Fifteen years have passed.

Fifteen years.

...Fifteen years!?

I stealthily stole a Child Rearing Diary (by: Alfred). I'll just pretend that I'm unaware that it's a stolen good and give it a read. —Uwah!! Alfred's handwriting is surprisingly messy. Even though he's such a methodical kind of guy.



Raising a child: year one.

So I'm one year old.

[Sare has grown a tail.]

It was quite sudden, but after waking up from a nice sleep—it had popped up. The [tail].

You may think I'm just messing with you, but it's the truth.

Even that stoic Alfred was quite surprised.

A tail with dark black fur.

It's long and narrow but, even so, it's quite fluffy. Because the fur is longer at the end the tip seems rounded.

It's bushy-ness has a kind of [Bufa~] sort of feeling. —Gitaigo banzai!

TN note: First one so far. I couldn't think of an appropriate image to replace 'Bufa~.' It gives the impression of a blooming fluffiness? Right? So I'm not even going to try. Gitaigo are what you call words like bufa. They're not proper onomatopoeia, but rather mimetic words, or sound effect words that stand in place of ideas. It doesn't translate well.

Anyways, it feels really excellent to the touch, and even to this day Lilian has the habit of often treating it like her toy.

When brushed it tickles quite a bit so I wish she'd stop it.

Also, it's painful when she squeezes it.

[Sare's tail tends to show quite a bit of emotion. When Sare is particularly happy or excited his tail waves back and forth with a lot of energy; it is very easy to understand.I also want to touch it....]

Alfred-san, even though you always looked so serious you were thinking that sort of thing, huh?

In any case, I didn't really have the intention of swinging it around so much. ——No matter how much I tried to hide my tail it was really easy to understand my thoughts, which was truly unacceptable.

Nowadays, for this reason and also because I don't like being Lilian's toy, I keep my tail hidden within my clothes. But when I go outside I take it out since I can use it in place of my hand to pick things up so it's quite convenient.

[Ancient Majin seem to have had tails however, so perhaps this is the case of a resurfacing physical trait.]

Oh~ Majin's used to have tails in the past, did they? This is the first I've heard of it.



Raising a child: year two.

Now I'm two.

[Sare's [Gram Istoor] has manifested itself.]

——That's not something I'd forget.

The room I used when I was first brought here had remained my room up until the point just before I turned two. That's because, just before I turned two, I completely destroyed it.

The term 'delinquent teenager' doesn't really work, perhaps I would be worthy of the term 'delinquent toddler.'

If I calmly think back on that time it was really quite dangerous.

Because the [eye of destruction] is utilized with vague components like feelings and sensations that depend on the individual, when it first manifested itself I couldn't control it and randomly fired. When my [eye of destruction] manifested and didn't stop, Alfred took the first chance he could get to forcibly close my eyes.

Was it caused by my avoidance of the things I feared? Or was it a result of all the remnant malice I held within myself?

Keeping things at a distance may have been unexpectedly ineffective and tended to make things awkward.

After that incident I remember I would cling to Lilian incessantly and cry constantly.

Around that time Lilian became an existence that was somewhat like a mother or older sister, though it was more complicated than that. Her existence had become something that was difficult to describe with words; a fact that I acknowledged in my heart. But, as always, she was still a fan of raw meat.

How should I put it? That aspect is just a part of her devilish charm.

A devilishness that men would lose to instantly.



Raising a child: year five.

I'm five years old.

[He is about able to control the [eye of destruction]. He may only be five, but he is able to move about the castle quite easily and freely. I have begun to think that the windows of Sanctos Castle only exist in order to be destroyed by Sare. —The repairs cannot keep up with him anymore....]

I sincerely apologize for my behavior at that time.

I have reflected.

I was at the peak of my desire to constantly keep progressing.



Raising a child: year eight.

Oh, I'm eight years old now.

[Around this time we are having Sare participate in Majin training. Everyone thinks that Sare is quite cute. At the moment he has to really struggle at it, but he will just have to hang in there. It is the perfect chance for us to recover our defences.]

My cuteness was constantly brutalized.

——It's a lie!! No, that's not quite right, rather, you can't call that sort of hellish thing 'training'!!

I have a lot of knowledge regarding death, but every time I was forced into the training camp that male Majins go through I thought things like [Am I going to die again...?]!!

When the joints of my arms and legs would noisily creak from the intense training I was going through I felt a lot of anger towards both the male and female Majins.

You might forget when looking at a guy like Alfred, but a large number of the male Majins are pretty sturdy and surprisingly hearty.

Speaking of Alfred, that training was extreme.

In terms of those Alfred-like gentlemanly guys, when I asked: where are those men of valor who served proudly? I never thought of them. I'll make sure to mention it so you don't misunderstand: those gentlemanly guys are the Majin's greatest warriors. When they strike like the "wind" there's nothing remotely gentlemanly about them.

TN: The kanji for "gentlemen" contains the kanji 風 which, on its own, means "wind." That is all.

Yes, those guys' training was unbearably severe.

Those bastards, their favorite phrase was: [Hahaha——right. Now, once more, ok~]. Incidentally, those guys also had fundamentally excellent bodies.

Their faces were always smiling, but it never reached their eyes.

[Watching Sare growing so quickly that you can hear his bones creak (*meki meki*) gives me the desire to pass down all of my techniques to him. But, I might be overdoing it a bit...]

See? I knew it!! Alfred's training was way too intense!!

—My bones creaking (*meki meki*) was because your training nearly broke something.



Raising a child: year ten.

I'm ten now.

[Lilian is, as usual, closely attached to Sare. Going by my favorite Child Growth Reference Diary (Revised Edition), Sare should begin entering his rebellious phase. I wonder if he feels constrained?]

—I'm currently going through that phase.

The problem is that she keeps trying to follow me all the way into Sanctos Castle's large public bath.

I really wish she'd hurry up and be more aware of the fact that she's a woman.

Even if an older stranger happened upon such a refreshing female form they would have a hard time, please be more considerate of my youthful vigor.

—But, I can risk saying this much:

What a magnificent body!

Lilian's devilishness knows no bounds.

The male libido is honest. In the presence of her devilish breasts one becomes compelled with the desire to touch them. In the presence of Lilian's devilishness half of my reason flies away, and even though I still retain the ability to resist—

At one time, when my hand slowly inched towards Lilian's chest, she graced me with a [smile] so pure, so completely without hostility, that I become ashamed.

Her innocent smile seems to tell me: [It's fine].

Does she even understand the situation?

But I wonder if it would be easy for her to handle my vulgar libido with that level tolerance.

I wish I could ignore the pangs of guilt felt by my conscience that I can hardly bear.

But if I ignored them and went along with my impulses my self-respect would be no greater than a grain of wheat, easily crushed and blown away into nothing.

Dealing with one's sexual needs is necessary, but self-respect is no less important.

—That's why I must temper my will to face this challenge.

Who said I had given up?



Raising a child: year twelve.

Twelve-years-old, huh?

[Though he is still growing, Sare's body is nearly fully grown. As a result of his training he has matured well and I think he has become quite a master of martial arts. Lilian and the others keep complaining that "It's boring now that we can't dress him up anymore..." but, in the first place, Sare is not a doll you know?when I happened to see them dressing him up in women's clothing, I truly felt sympathetic.....]

Then why didn't you help me out that time....!?

[Speaking of growth, around this time it usually begins to come to a halt. Once the body has matured to a certain point, Majins will, for the time being, stop maturing and retain a youthful appearance.]

The hellish training with the male Majins, and the days of being dressed up like a doll by the female Majins; those were the customs of this period of my life.

As Alfred says in the second part, ever since I became twelve-years-old my physical appearance hasn't matured at all.

On another note, Alfred once told me that, at 8-years-old, a Majin will

normally appear the same age as a 17-year-old member of the Pure race.

TN: I may be wrong about this statement. If I'm wrong I will make sure to make a post regarding the change and amend it here a note at the bottom of the page.

The Majin race's growth is fast, but once their body matures their aging is halted. They continue to appear in their prime for as long as they live.

It's a convenient body, but you can never really know how old Majins really are, which is bound to cause other problems I'm sure.

By the way, in Alfred's case it seems that he has definitely passed 100-years in age.

Ordinarily, those of long-lived lineages forget their own age at some point, or so I've been told.

I promise myself that I'll at least keep track until I've reached 100.

By the way, my spirit hasn't changed from before; I can vaguely tell that I was tough and arrogant.

That final instance when I became defiant is a good example.

No matter what, my desire to show off will never die.



Raising a child: year fourteen.

I'm fourteen now.

[Since two years ago, the women have been introducing him to sorcery. From their perspective he has a long way to go, but from where I stand I feel he has learned plenty. I really wish that, during their practice in the nearby forest, he would refrain from blowing things apart... In any case, I guess I need to admit that he has become capable of defending himself. It feels as if the time since we picked up Sare has passed in the blink of an eye. Since our numbers were declining we were losing sight of a purpose, and Sare's arrival tugged at our heartstrings. — — He continues to be our guiding light.]

What straightforward words. — — I'm getting a little embarrassed.

But it's a nice, happy feeling.

But training in sorcery with the women was just like my training with the men: dreadful.

Deep down I wondered where the happy faces, that went [Kyaa Kyaa] or [Ufufufu] when they would dress me up like a doll, went.

My stock in female honesty may have fallen a bit.

TN: This is the nicest way I can write this line.

Sorcery is fueled by the Majin power (*TN: Maryoku from here on.*) stored in our bodies. Once learned, by running this power through the technique formulas, you can give rise to phenomena and transformations.

Here's a general explanation of sorcery:

Because the Majin race inherently possesses Maryoku in their bodies, Maryoku is used to fuel techniques.

That's why we call techniques that use Maryoku— —[Sorcery].

The first step towards mastering sorcery is absolutely the most difficult.

It was the same in the past: sorcery originates from Maryoku, so the first barrier Majins faced was understanding how to sense the Maryoku that dwelled within them: the technique's [fuel].

Lilian, with her usual level of arrogance, had the nerve to tell me "No meat until you can sense your Maryoku."

Even though I told her from the outset that "I definitely don't want something like raw meat" — —

It was at this time that I had realized that the term [meat] and [meal] had the same meaning in Lilian's unique vocabulary.

The other women proposed plans like [Wouldn't it be faster if he was closer to death?], which were approved.

— —Oi! Stop it! I've had more than enough close encounters with death.....!!

The result of nearly being starved to death was that my senses were heightened, which may have been what allowed me to get a grasp on the flow of

my power.

Of course, I can only acknowledge that in hindsight. Ahh....

——Not that I want to.....!!

By the way, the food I broke my fast with was raw meat.

As long as it was edible, anything was fine.

It was amazingly delicious.

The later practice to invoke my Maryoku and weave the technique's formula was another terrible trial.

Using the fear I had honed from facing death, I became so skillful in practicing its practical application that the women were really surprised.

Because of those feelings I advanced quickly, but to me I was just glad to be alive.

I had to be taught how to organize sorcery formulas. I was taught through lectures, of course, but there were also practical lessons where I had to reply while maintaining composure. These lessons were frightening enough to send shivers down my spine. It's not something I'm proud of.

But, I mean, does a person who can stay focused while a dagger is being thrust at their throat actually exist...!?

If I tested below their standards, I was told [Around the castle, 300 times, one week, ok?]. That was it.

Female Majins can also show some pretty scary faces. Seeing those beautiful faces wearing such vicious smiles was super worrisome.

Anyways, the women are a big fan of the policy: [Kill before you can be killed]. As a result I get the feeling that they focused on teaching me attack techniques that were straight forward in nature. Rather, those were the only types I was taught.

[Kill with the fastest, shortest strike]. The women repeated these words nearly every day, to this day those words are burned into my mind.

Therefore, the practice for offensive techniques was held separate from the

multitudes of practices on [prompt] invocation.

[The guy who dies while weaving the formula is the biggest idiot] was another one of their favorite phrases.

In any case, it's inevitable that the forest around the castle would be blown away as a result of that sort of training regiment.

As a result, to the Alfred who had to running around to clean up afterwards, I am truly very sorry. — — Really.

Also, there's an upper limit to the amount of Maryoku you can store in your body, and every time you use sorcery it decreases. Just like physical exhaustion, if you rest a bit it'll recover.

Just as there are various techniques that require different amounts of fuel, the recovery time needed also varies.

If you use it until you're nearly empty, you'll feel anemic.

If you exhaust all of it, there is no doubt that you'll collapse where you stand.



That brings us to today: I'm fifteen.

I returned the Children Rearing Diary (By: Alfred) back to where I found it, and went outside Sanctos Castle.

Irudoe domain's Sanctos Castle is surrounded by land covered by a massive forest, and gives the impression of a place separated from the rest of the world.

Recently, it's become a simple hobby of mine to take strolls through the forest.

Always staying inside the castle can get to be stuffy, so taking a stroll becomes an attractive diversion.

Alfred and the other men always happily give me their permission.

But Lilian and the women always try to pull me back inside out of worry.

I wear a sword on my left side, and a dagger at the small of my back and, while swinging my tail, I stride through the forest.

Today's stroll is for the sake of looking for some food supplies.

Irudoe domain's forest was a treasure trove of plants and animals.

I wanted to look for food supplies as a gesture of gratitude for the constant care I receive.

With those thoughts on my mind— —

“Ohh, found it.”

Food supply located.

A dog with white fur.

.....a dog?

It's a little weird.

The dog's body is about three times bigger than my own.

— —A-according to the libraries reference books it's a bit bigger than dogs normally are.

“No, it's way too big.”

It's front legs were five times taller than mine.

One could expect a strike from those legs to really hurt. — —Hurt enough to kill you I would think.

Those limbs seemed really agile.

— —Those things could probably slice me in two...

I'll admit that during my simple strolls a part of me considered the excitement of encountering an unknown animal, or experiencing a situation that would cause me to break out in a cold sweat. But those were just things I considered.

“Ah, it noticed me.”

From my spot in the shadow of the long grass, the giant dog noticed me. The beast turned its pupil towards where I was hiding.

As expected of a wild animal. What excellent senses.

It turned it's stern glare in my direction with what I would suppose was a desire to attack— —

“Eh, it’s running away?”

That fierce looking giant dog turned away from me.

Immediately after it saw me and seemed to look at me in a vicious manner it turned around, shaking, with its tail between its legs, and ran away in a panic.

——Damn it! Don’t run away! Where’s your pride as a wild animal?!

I immediately left my hiding spot and pulled myself onto the branch of a nearby tree.

Because there were so many old trees there were a lot of branches in my line of sight, but compared to the view from the ground it was a definite improvement.

Using those plentiful branches I was able to move from tree to tree and close the distance between me and the giant dog.

——If I were to use the [Gram Istoor] it would be over pretty quickly, but it wasn’t good to always rely on it.

There was always the danger of [tears of blood], especially if it became a habit in the future to just rapidly fire it as I pleased.

“——Alright!”

It’s still a little ways off, but if I give one last leap with all of my strength it should be enough. I push off the branch of a large tree and aim for the giant dog’s back.

While I’m in the air I unsheath the sword on my left hip, and once I land I aim a strike towards the giant dog’s head.

“Grr——! Grrrrrr——.....”

It died quickly.

It’s over just like that.

I jump off its back before it lands with a thud; the forest is silent.

“————Sorry about this. But I need you to become our food.”

You’ve gotta eat to live.

As this was around my fifth life, my opinion regarding life and death could agree with this sort of simple statement, after all, how could you argue its validity?

— — It's fine.

It's something I can understand and agree with.

— — I agree with it. As long as it's fine then I'm good.

I have no problem supporting those easy to understand, self-interested, self-justified words.

It's easy to find fault with those kinds of selfish guys, but it doesn't matter to me. If I didn't cling to my own selfishness, there's no guarantee that I wouldn't have gone mad from that hellish loop of reincarnation.

I don't know how long I can rely this sort of argument, but the responsible party who would regret it would be me, so I'm not very concerned.

Anyways, I managed to kill it without suffering any injury. Next I took out my knife and began to disassemble the damn dog.

As you would expect, I can't carry it all back.

Whatever I leave behind will be happily eaten by other animals, so it's fine.

“— — — — Hm?”

While cutting into the body I felt a sudden [glance].

A vague sense that I'm being watched.

Centered on my back, a faint gaze seems to take me in.

The feelings I get from that gaze seems to indicate that, in the next moment, I'll be assaulted by some sort of disaster.

“— — — —”

I get the feeling that something is going to fly at me from behind.

That hazy glare focuses itself into a sharp needle and wants to bury itself in my back.

At least that's what I thought, because I suddenly felt a [killing intent] from

that needle-sharp gaze.

So, in reaction to what I was sensing, I turned around and focused my eyes on the area behind me.

As soon as I turned around, a [dagger] flew towards me from where I felt that gaze.

— — There was no need to use the [eye of destruction].

I used my tail to grab the handle and throw the dagger back from whence it came.

There was a rustle in the overgrowth, and then the origin of the killing intent disappeared.

— — Should I go after it? Or leave it be?

Hesitation ruled me for a short while.

I felt that I definitely shouldn't completely ignore it, so— —

“— — If it's only at that level, there's no need to make a fuss,” was what I said at first, but— —

“For the time being, let's report it to Alfred,” was what I decided to do.

In light of this decision, I took hold of the meat I had harvested from the giant dog in one hand and made my way towards Sanctos Castle.

Chapter 04: The Day the Majin Regrets

Since then, something kind of unusual happened.

By chance I witnessed Alfred, and the other men, training without me. Recently I've seen Alfred spinning around a long spear in the castle's courtyard.

I wonder if what happened really was a sign of danger?

"Fufu, when I look at Sare I feel a renewed urge to train."

Well aren't you easily excitable.

"How has it been in the forest recently? I know I told you about something weird happening in there, but..."

"No, since then nothing has happened. —I wonder what it was you saw."

"If it happens again, I'll be sure to check it out properly."

"—Of course."

Because of the ridiculous difference between how old they looked and how old they were, Alfred and the men were fathers who looked like my older brothers, and Lilian and the women were mothers who looked like my older sisters.

It's a difficult topic, so don't bother thinking on it too deeply.

But they were definitely my treasured family.

They're all I need.

"—Alright, so I'm off to the forest again."

"Understood, please be careful, ok?"

My tail waved in reply to Alfred's words as I turned on my heel and left.



And so time passed.

My body doesn't age. I still appear in my teens, but that's not my real age.

—At any rate, I've started to feel a bit constrained by Sanctos Castle.

In the same way, I had already felt the limits of Irudoe domain's boundary during my walks in the forest. Having said that, I'm somewhat hesitant to express my desire to leave the Irudoe domain. But, as if he could see right through to my heart, Alfred told me: "Sare, how would you like to see the lands outside of Irudoe? We are just about out of things left to teach you. Rather than secluding yourself in these lands, you should leave and broaden your horizons— —I think you would have a lot of fun living that way."

I've spoken with Alfred and the others regarding my broken memories.

Because of those discussions, they should indirectly understand my fear of dying, and my attachment to life.

I threw myself on my bed while considering Alfred's words.

"But doesn't the Pure race consider every Majin their enemy?"

"That does happen, but not everyone in the Pure race will act that way. During the time when we were at peace, there were many in the Pure race who accepted us. If you can get them to properly look at and listen to you, then you can easily ascertain if its possible to change their opinions regarding Majins."

"I understand what you're saying, but..."

But, if you ever think that you cannot bear such responsibility, your home will always be here.

Those words linger in my mind.

"— —I get it. Then, I'll check it out."

"It is decided then. Tomorrow, come to my room to collect some travel equipment we will prepare for your departure."

"Fine. Fine."

As usual my tail doesn't listen to me and conveys my true feelings properly. I decide to go ahead and go to sleep.



The next day.

"Hey, for travel equipment isn't it a little too luxurious...?!"

“———Well. This is the Irudoe Empire’s [Imperial Sword]. It was used by members of the Majin royalty. Back when we were still a proper country it functioned as a symbol of the royal family, but in our current situation it serves almost no purpose and has been stored in the treasure storeroom. It still functions as an actual weapon and is quite useful, so you should be able to find use for it. I only use long weapons like the spear, so I will give this to Sare.”

I was given a sword in a black sheath.

The sheath was patterned with gold-colored metal, similarly the sword’s straight handle and guard were gold-colored.

——Wait, is this real gold? This is made out of gold, isn’t it?

Even more eye-catching was the blade.

I gripped the handle and unsheathed the sword, revealing an excessively luxurious blade to the world.

“Whoa, it’s bright!”

The degree of its brilliance is bad for the eyes.

“What is the sword blade made out of?”

“A mineral called the Eternal Light Stone. You can swing without worry of any damage or chipping as long as you do not use it too outrageously. By the way, the pommel also includes an Eternal Light Stone.”

In the pommel was a stone that radiated light just as blinding as the blade. It was perfectly spherical.

Alfred’s comment about not using it [outrageously] made the present me wonder that if it had really never been damaged or chipped throughout its existence then what could damage it? What an unnecessary reaction.

“Also, here is a dagger made from Moonlight Stone. It is a useful light source when it is dark, so if you want to go hunting at night it can be quite convenient. Ah, yes, also, there is a set of travel clothes that took Lilian a whole year to weave. Durability is guaranteed. For Sare’s sake it was made so you can easily hide or reveal your tail.”

Clothing specially made and hand-woven by Lilian? In the whole world there is

only one set of clothing like these. For a whole year Lilian worked on it for me.

To my eyes they seemed to sparkle.

Suddenly, the mass of feelings that welled up from the bottom of my stomach stopped and my eyes widened.

Was it my imagination, or were there actually delicate gold and silver threads woven into the clothing?

—After the initial surprise wore off I seriously look at the material.

“We found the cloth in the treasure storeroom and borrowed the best parts from here and there. There are minerals mixed into the cloth, so while it is not impervious to damage, it is very difficult to cut through—”

Right, there’s no reason for me to dwell their origins.

A sturdy sword, a sturdy dagger, and sturdy clothes. If I just think about it in this way, it puts me at ease.

“There are other small pieces of equipment that are stored in this leather bag. If you wear everything together with this mantle—it is complete.”

Alfred’s eyes were sparkling.

His eyes seemed to be saying: *Hurry and put everything on!*

It couldn’t be helped in that situation, so I changed into the travel clothes, stuck the Imperial Sword on my left and the dagger at the small of my back, and picked up the leather bag.

It’s pretty easy to move in.

Sure, the clothes seem to exude an air of elegance, but they function well as travel clothes.

They fit as if I had recently been sized for them.

Over it all I wore a large black mantle that reached my knees.

At the neck of the mantle was a large pendant. Once I was done I turned to face Alfred.

“—How nice. It came out well. Good, good.”

Alfred had narrowed his eyes to examine me and gave a wide smile.

“The pendant is a gift from all of us. Because we are Majins, we engraved the Gram Istoora’s six-pointed star in the center. It might be ironic that we want it to protect you though. —But, it could also be seen as proof that we are family. Because it is just a pendant, I think it will not cause any negative feelings from people who happen to see it, after all, to their eyes it is just a six-pointed star.”

The pendant had a base layer of glossy red stone overlaid with a six-pointed star made from gold.

“Well then, it seems everything is in order. Sare, you should leave now—before you change your mind,” Alfred urged.

I double-checked that I had everything.

“That line just now was just like something a parent would say.”

“Haha, I have had some practice—” Alfred replied with a somewhat lonely expression.

“I see. —Right, then I’m off. If I get tired of life out there I’ll be back.”

“Do not fret and travel safely—”

Alfred’s words of farewell were fewer than I had expected.



“—Sare.”

As soon as I took my first step out of Sanctos Castle, someone called out to me.

When I noticed the voice and turned around I saw Lilian half-jogging towards me.

I met her half-way and, upon seeing her pale face, grasped her hand to support her.

“.....Be safe.”

“Right, I’m heading out Lilian.”

Her face was, as usual, not very expressive, but I was knowledgeable enough to

read the small variances.

I'm not trying to sound arrogant, but being who I am, it always comes out that way.

Her face looked really lonely.

"This is my home, so I'll definitely return."

".....you can't come home just because you're lonely."

After saying this, Lilian gave me a smile.

——I revoke my previous statement that her expressions changed minutely.

Lilian's smile, if I explained it simply it was——a gorgeous expression.

"——Take care."

With those simple words Lilian forcibly turned my body around and gave me a push from behind.

"——I'm off."

As I thought there are too few words, but that's just how it is.

Although I had doubts, after all, at Lilian's urging——I felt the need to continue forward towards the outside world.



Awhile later, I dwelled on the unfortunate brevity of those words.

I was too slow in realizing they were too few, and came to regret it later.



"I've walked quite a ways, huh?"

So I remarked with deep emotion as I stopped for a moment in Irudoe domain's forest.

I was in a copse of thick overgrowth near a large tree that marked the outer boundary of the domain.

If I were to pass over the exposed roots of that large tree I would no longer be in Majin territory.

In truth, I probably should have been more excited about this moment, but I was distracted by the strange pulling at my heart at the short farewells from Alfred and Lilian.

Even I don't know if I will ever return, so why didn't they at least ask me when I planned to come back?

While worrying I slowly advanced towards the large tree.

I left my baggage, the leather bag, near the tree, took a seat, and seriously considered whether or not I had any regrets before crossing over its roots.

As I began to think about it— —

“— —”

At some point, from some place I again felt that [vague gaze].

A gaze that seemed to dismiss me as insignificant; an uncomfortable sort of feeling.

— —It made me uneasy.

The arrogance of that gaze and how it wasn't trying to be subtle and promptly disappeared gave me cause to worry.

“.....who is it?”

Even if I ask, of course, I won't receive an answer.

— —Rather, who would answer?

“.....”

As I thought, let's return for now.

Once I decided, I lifted my head and turned my gaze back towards Sanctos Castle.

Which allowed me to finally become aware of the [disaster].



From where I stood there was a [red glow] whose origins were outside my scope of vision, and [dark smoke] rose ominously from that glow.



Smoke...?

My feelings of unease doubled.

I jumped up immediately and broke into a run.

—It's impossible.

For something to happen in such a short amount of time—it's unbelievable.

Alfred and the rest had some stuff they wanted to burn and the flames got out of control a bit; it was surely something simple like that.

That gaze from before, if that gaze was from someone who held anger towards the Majins then—

—Stop it. Those kind of dark, difficult thoughts—just stop it.

It's fine if I only worry about myself.

That sort of arrogance is fine because I can deal with any unhappiness that befalls me.

But—

I finally realize—



That conceit leaves me utterly unprepared to deal with watching unhappiness befall those around me.



All those deaths I wracked up gave birth to my meager self-righteousness, and my attachment to living.

—I'm fine. I just have to worry about myself.

That terrible way of thinking circled in my mind.

Those terrible memories that had been slowly buried by these years of learning and talking and living with everyone were slowly drawn back out from deep within.

—I'm fine, so there's nothing to worry about.



My mind was numb with fear.



Run. Run. Run. Don't think, just run.

I forgot about the bag I left behind and just ran.

And then— —

Exhausted I groped along the front gate of Sanctos Castle and— —

I refused to believe what I saw.

Fire. Smoke. Blood.

Blood. A person. Fire.

A person, a per— —

Bits of flesh, splattered blood,

— —the family.

My family, lying in their own blood.

“What is this? — —everyone, this is— —”

Here and there were evidence of battle.

Bits and pieces of Sanctos Castle were lying about, and the ground was gouged out in many places.

The bodies of my family also showed signs of significant damage.

— —I was gone no longer than any of my normal strolls through the forest.

— —Why was today any different?

“Haha....”

I couldn't stop that hollow laugh from escaping my lips.

The sudden shock caused me to utter that emotionless sound.



Without exception every one of their eyes had been gouged out.



Everyone seemed to look at me with pitch black gazes.

Black gazes tinged with blood, holes that saw nothing.

“...tch! Anyone!! Is anyone still alive!?”

——Stop it. Don't say it.

It's as if I'm saying they're all dead.

“———Sa...re....”

A quiet voice caught my ears as I was fighting my panic.

It's Lilian's voice.

“Ah! Where?! Lilian, where are you?!”

As I looked around at the multitude of Majin corpses, a single body moved: it was [her].

Like everyone else, her eyes had been gouged out——

Near her, in silence, was Alfred's [corpse].

“...you....came....back...?”

I embraced Lilian as she whispered out those words.

“It'll be alright! I'll save you!!”

I comforted her with those lies.

From those gaping holes blood ran out and stained her face.

“...Sa....re....[Ta...ke....care....]”

Ahhh....

She gently caressed me with her pale white hand as she repeated those words of farewell, and then——

Her hand fell to the ground.

“Ah....ahh.....”

Lilian, touch my face once more.

Please, don't die——

“Aaahhh.....”

Please, don't leave me all alone——

“UwaaaaaahhhhHHHH——!!”

——Don't abandon me.



Why?

[Why?]-



——I don't understand.

——I don't understand.

——I don't understand.

....it's unnecessary.

If I can't understand it——

This place——

This scene——

Everything——



——Let's just destroy it.



“AaaaaahhhhhhHHHH——!!”

I took in everything within my field of vision, I looked at the remains of my family, the castle, and everything around it——

I strongly wished for all of it to be destroyed.

There was a passing feeling like my eyes were burning——

My vision faded.

.....

.....

...

..

.

Damn it all.

Chapter 05: The Day the Majin Mourns

The damage I caused by invoking the [eye of destruction] in my fury was more terrible than I could have imagined.

My vision faded and I lost consciousness, when I next opened my eyes towering before me was a mountain of rubble.

Both Sanctos Castle and those lying on the ground, my family, had been destroyed.

The ground where they would have been was gouged out, it left me with a strange feeling when I looked at it, and I slowly began to realize the extent of the destruction I had caused by relying on my rage.

“.....Ahahaha”

I could only laugh drily.

The area where I was lying was the only place that had been spared.

Alfred, Lilian, the other Majins, everything had disappeared.

“——What have I done?”

After that dry laugh, I spoke those words to condemn myself.

——I know what I did.

I didn't want to look upon that scene anymore, so I wished for it all to be destroyed.

“Because I only ever worried about myself——”

They died.

In addition, afterwards, I destroyed their remains.

“That's right. ——I destroyed them.”

The remains of the family that had carefully raised me.

——So that I could accept it.

I think I might be off in the head.

If not, I wouldn't have destroyed the remains, their corpses, and the castle filled with memories.

Ordinarily you'd properly bury them in graves.

"— —That's wrong."

The truth was that I couldn't accept it.

The scene laid out before my eyes, everything— —I refused to accept it.

"— —That's right. It's fine to think that way."

— —That sort of egotism.

"It's fine if I only think of myself— —"

Hahaha.

.....

— —Who could do that?

"— —There's no way I could think like that...."



It was easy to keep lying in that place. I didn't want to move.

As I laid there, in stillness, I thought about a lot of things; I was held captive by my thoughts.

Why were Alfred and Lilian so determined to send me off in such simple way, with so few words?

Or so I thought once I was able to think with a calm mind.

I wonder if Alfred entrusted something to me within that leather bag.



".....It really is here."

Closely packed together with other various items was a thin journal.

On the cover [Sare] was clearly written.

With shaking hands I carefully opened it.

I was shocked by its contents.

But despite my shock the words were convincing.

I willingly accepted the words that were written without complaint.

From the beginning it read:

[To Sare: At the time you are reading this you should have left the forest and stepped upon the ground of a foreign country. Maybe it is already night time, and you have found an inn to rest at.]

That was how it began.

[I am going to write about what we have discovered concerning your origins from here on. We are a people who like to collect information you know. Two years ago we received a report from some family members who had successfully infiltrated the Pure race's territory.]

So that's why Alfred and the others renewed their training.

[As a result, we uncovered your lineage.]

When I read that sentence, my heart fluttered uneasily.

——I wanna know.

I wanna know,

but I'm worried that if I knew, then I might lose something as a result.

[Before I tell you, I want to reaffirm something...]

I held my breath.

[——Sare, you are definitely a Majin. ——A member of the Majin race, just like the rest of the family.]

——Ahh....thank goodness....

Just knowing that is a huge relief.

[But, your soul has been involved in quite a conspiracy. You might even say that your soul has been ensnared in it. You once said, *I have memories from before I was born, even though they have mostly faded I know that I've died*

before, and I remember being killed.]

.....

[Regarding the secrets pertaining to your birth——west of the Irudoe Empire is a country ruled by a hot headed royal family: the {Atem Kingdom}. It is a neighboring country of Irudoe. As a matter of fact, {Atem Kingdom} was the country we Majin last fought against. As you may recall, I told you how it was a severe and disheartening battle. It was the war where the Majins had everything taken from them.]

In what way was my birth tied to the Pure race’s royal family I wonder?

[I am sure you are tired of hearing me repeat this, but when the Majin population was larger, Irudoe was a proper empire. We had a proper emperor, and held our own amongst other foreign nations. Irudoe was a nation known throughout the world. During those times the Majins fought with various countries including the Atem Kingdom, but the Atem Kingdom was single-mindedly focused in their desire to cause the destruction of the Majins. Various reasons for this existed but I will set them aside for now.]

The [Atem Kingdom]——was it?

[And so, in ancient times, the ones who wished the most for the fall of the Majins, the Atem Kingdom, initiated a certain {strategy}.]

——Strategy?

[Because the Atem Kingdom fought so often with the Majins, they had become very familiar with our overwhelming power. They also fully understood the differences in individual physical strength as well. That is why, back then, the Atem Kingdom——]



[Created their own Majin.]

[One loyal to Atem Kingdom, one who would always stay obedient,]

[A Majin who exists to destroy other Majins.]



[The strategy's first requirement was acquiring a Majin body. The Atem Kingdom had secured a Majin {body} hundreds of years ago. Because of the huge passage of time the {body} had become a corpse but, using a particular technique, they succeeded in resurrecting it.]

— —That's ridiculous.

How could such a technique be possible?

[It took a long time, and the lives of many technique users were sacrificed, but they were able to make it possible.]

— —That's insane.

[After being revived that Majin body recovered its abilities, and was made viable as a vessel. Next, the Atem Kingdom went about creating a {soul} to drive that vessel.]

When I read those words my heart thumped noisily.

[That soul— —]

— —.....

[— —Sare, it is yours.]

— —Ah.....

[The Atem Kingdom once again performed a massive and demanding technique and summoned your {soul} from somewhere.]

— —This is way too crazy.

[Whether you came here from some other world, I cannot say. Who knows if even those who performed that technique could say for sure. Once they successfully called your soul from somewhere they then took it and— —forcefully inserted it into the body of that generation's Irudoe emperor.]

It was inserted.

How did they do it?

[As a separate project from creating a Majin, the Atem Kingdom would raise warriors of the Pure race for the express purpose of destroying those of the Majin race.]

.....

[These warriors possessed the ability to stand on equal footing before an Irudoe emperor. They had one such warrior face off against that generation's Irudoe emperor while carrying your soul so that, during the battle, he could use a technique to force your soul into the emperor's body. The plan's success mostly relied on luck— —and took less than a moment.]

But why?

Why did they do this and not just immediately put my soul into the vessel?

[I have an abstract idea as to why they decided to do this. I believe that when they called your soul it still had a clear sense of self and tenaciously clung to it. Before trying to put your soul into the ancient body they had revived after a lot of effort, they wanted it to adapt to being in a Majin. At the same time, the soul would inherit the {memories of battle} which are ingrained within the flesh of every Irudoe emperor.]

Memories of....battle.

[The vessel's abilities had to be able to exceed the power of normal Majins. How else was it to succeed in destroying the Majin race? Even more important, they had faith in this strategy. They believed that, in the end, they would be able to retrieve a soul that would easily attach itself to the vessel. I think I can guess why they acted so haphazardly with your soul: when they initially summoned it they must have tried to put it in the vessel, but it was rejected and, in their confusion, they made the sudden decision to insert your soul into the Irudoe emperor.]

But,

[In the end, you did not receive the memories of battle held by the {emperor's lineage}, and it seems to have been a failure.]

My soul was housed in the body of an emperor to try and inherit memories of battle.

But the plan ended in failure.

I know that better than anyone.

The memories I did inherit, I know them well.

— — *That's what they deserved.*

Those words came to mind.

[But something unexpected happened instead. Because another existence was suddenly forced into the emperor's mind, it created a gap. This gap stifled the emperor's movement and created a chance. The Pure race warrior, who specialized in fighting Majins, used this opportunity to defeat the emperor. It was not a part of the plan, but if a chance appears you take it I suppose. As a result, the Irudoe emperor was killed. In the end your soul, which had not had a chance to attached itself to the emperor's body, rejected the flesh when it died. You were instead attracted, and held onto, the Irudoe emperor's soul. Your soul, which had only experienced the suffering of death, clung to life and resisted being extinguished.]

It almost seemed as if the soul of that generation's emperor was sacrificed in my place.

If my soul hadn't gotten in the way, he probably would have survived.

[Has it, or has it not, inherited the memories? In order to find out, the Atem Kingdom had no other choice than to reawaken you. Upon discovering it was a failure, they decided to try again, and so they reinserted your soul into subsequent emperors and defeated them when your presence in their minds created a chance. Until, finally, they decided that it was time to move forward with their strategy— —or rather, your soul had been broken, and so, eighteen years ago, you were finally inserted into the vessel.]



The day that the Majin who would destroy the Majin race— —was completed.



[But, at the very last possible moment, something happened that even the Atem Kingdom could not anticipate. Shortly after they put you into the vessel, its form was changed into that of a baby, and in that form you escaped from them.]

I possess absolutely no memory of something like that happening.

[This is just my guess, but perhaps it was the work of the Irudoe emperors'

souls that were still clinging to your own. Quickly following the moment in which you were put into the vessel, these souls awoke before you and borrowed the vessel's body to take action and save you. ——Well, that is just my guess. Rather, I hope that is what happened.]

.....

[That is the extent of the information we have verified. To tell the truth there are more finite details we had wanted to investigate, but recently our spies' identities were discovered. We have taken up training to penetrate into Atem Kingdom's royal castle ourselves, but for now this is all the information I have to give you.]

.....

[If there are still things you are curious about, it would be easy to just ask the king of the Atem Kingdom directly, but I would rather you refrained from doing such a thing. The king of Atem is still searching for you. We, your family, would never wish for you to be exposed to such danger. That is why, please resist your own daring personality and the temptation to seek revenge. But, in the end, it is your decision to make. Act in whatever way you feel you must. Lastly, my final words to you——]



Sare, you are a Majin——who possesses a [body] from the age of Irudoe's foundation, who has touched the [souls] of multiple generations of Irudoe emperors, and who has been raised by the last emperor of the Irudoe Empire: Albert Sanctos Santana.



[Even after reading all of this, please do not return to Irudoe. If the Atem Kingdom were to discover you here, they would probably initiate an attack on Irudoe. Although we have no intention of losing, our biggest fear is that you would come back, and the Atem Kingdom would find and kidnap you. You are our light, our reason for living, our dear family member that we must protect. We do not feel this way towards you because you are like an orphan of the lineage of emperors. Even if you had come to us as a Pure race child Sare would still be Sare. ——You are you. It is because you are Sare, that you are our family.]

“What the hell.....something that important.....tell me sooner——”

[Lastly, I have something very serious to discuss with you. If Atem Kingdom succeeds in killing all of us, the king of Atem will have fulfilled his pointless desire. After all, his most desired wish is to destroy all Majins. If we die, you will be the last living Majin. I have two predictions as to how the king may wish to use you still.]

My first prediction is that:

[There is no changing the fact that you possess a large power, as do all Majins. Because the Atem king planned on using you to destroy the other Majins you have a significant amount of war potential, so he may wish to utilize you for a different militaristic purpose.]

Either that or:

[You, who would be the last of the Majin, could be seen as a foreign threat to his country and he may try to erase your existence. In any case, there is no chance Atem's king will leave you be.]

In conclusion:

[As I told you before, what you decide to do is up to you. If you happen to be the last of the Majins, and you wish to continue to think and act in your own interests, that is fine. You do not need to worry about our enemy..... ——Sare, the days I spent with you were enjoyable and filled with happiness. ——Be sure to watch out for yourself. Take care.]

The paper became spotted with tears.

Not tears of blood; just normal, clear tears.

After hearing everything, many of the questions I'd always had were answered.

The reason why I had to face death so many times:

My mind was present in the bodies of successive emperors of Irudoe at the moments of their deaths.

The reason why I had a tail:

My body was from the same generation as the first emperor of the Irudoe

Empire.

The reason why Alfred and the others suddenly renewed their training:
Because they wanted to gain the strength to raid Atem's royal castle.

The reason why Alfred and Lilian were so adamant that I begin my journey:
They anticipated that Atem's current king was planning an attack.

The reason why everyone wished to protect me:

I— — — —



I give this body to you. After all, I went to a lot of trouble to change its appearance so you could grow up normally within it. The fact that your soul has completely acclimated to it is proof that it is already your own. I have no reason to hesitate. Carry in your chest your pride as a Majin, be strong, and live a good life— —my son.

We were able to steal your body away from those terrible people in the end. As a result you, our last hope, were able to live a proper life. What comes next is up to you. — —Until we meet again, stay healthy— —my child.

So the guy who was stuffed inside me during that final battle with Atem was you, huh? You made it really hard to focus, but it's not like that was your own will so it can't be helped. I'll forgive you this time. But ya know, you better not be thinking about comin' over here. If you start believing that you ending up here can't be helped, you might just screw up while thinking that way and actually die. If you do come over here for a stupid reason like that, I'll be sure to kick your ass. — —Anyways, you stay healthy— —kid.

Take pride in being our child, and in being the last child of the Majin. — —Live nobly— —our son.



From deep in my soul echoed numerous voices.



I sincerely apologize. I was unable to protect our family. (Alfred)

Ah, you are the last Irudoe emperor. You need not be concerned. You did everything you could as an Irudoe emperor. And you managed to protect this, or rather our, child.

We all share the founder’s opinion, Alfred.

I thank you for your kindness, founder, emperors. (Alfred)

We will be leaving first. — — Farewell, our son.

From within my body, there was a definite feeling of something pulling away.

We will still live in Sare’s heart. Even if you may no longer need us, as long as you remember, we will continue to live on within you. But, do not feel bound by us. We all wish for you to live exactly as you wish. Stay in good health— — our son, Sare.

“Alfred....!”

At the very end, only one last, warm *something* remained.

Take care, Sare.

The warmth of the person who would hold me when I cried.

“Lilian.....!!”

Then the remaining something was pulled away.



The souls seemed to change into tears as they left my body.

I had no ability to lessen or stop those tears.

I cried as if I was a newborn babe, showing an unsightly appearance.

“Live as I wish.”

Those kind words, which sounded a little conceited, were forever sealed tightly within my heart.

— — —

— —

—

End of Prologue.

TN: I normally try to keep the translation as close to the Japanese as possible, but I made a huge number of edits in this chapter since many details were implied rather than explicitly stated. If something still seems vague or mysterious, then it's on purpose because the author loves being vague and mysterious. But, as a result of these edits, I am confident that I have represented the information as accurately as possible.

Chapter 06: Bearer of Black Flame: the Final Emperor

After crying for a good, long while, Sare took a moment to reorganize his thoughts.

Many questions had been answered, and the troubles in his heart had more or less cleared up.

But, the scene he had witnessed was still fresh in his mind, it was something that couldn't just be shrugged off, and when he remembered it at times a sharp pain would assail his heart.

The bodies were gone.

Before they could even begin to rot, he used the Gram Istoor, the eye of destruction, to destroy everything. Sanctos Castle was mostly destroyed; all that remained was a pile of rubble, and a strangely shaped area gouged out of the earth.

Sare returned to that strangely shaped place and lied down nearby in a daze; his way forward seemed dark.

— —*what should I do now?*

The ones that had fought with Alfred and the others should still be near, it should be possible to search for them.

But,

— — *there's a chance that they're already gone...*

When Sare had returned there had been no one nearby, and after using the eye of destruction and passing out for awhile, no one had tried to attack him. If that was the case, they must have quickly withdrawn their forces long before his returned.

“...haha, so it’d be useless...”

Admitting it out loud didn’t make the situation seem any less futile.

—*The only thing I didn’t lose was my own life.*

Of course, simply dwelling on what has been lost and losing oneself in the past makes it impossible to look towards the future.



Abandoning his gloomy thoughts, Sare lay sprawled on the ground watching the sky gradually grow darker by the minute.

“.....”

I have to do something.

As Sare tried to think of uncomplicated things, the edge of this resolute thought kept trying to interrupt.

—*For now I don’t want to do anything at all.*

Sare put his arm over his eyes, blocking out his vision, and kept descending into the depths of similarly aimless thoughts.

Quite a bit of time has passed, hasn't it? As he thought this Sare, who had his face pressed against the earth, heard an unusual [sound]. The small sound of something stalling and sputtering.

A sound that seemed to come from within the crumbling Sanctos Castle.

Lifting his listless body from the ground, Sare rose to search for the sound which seemed to echo loudly in the stillness around the castle, where even the sounds of insects could not be heard.



As he carelessly brushed and moved rubble from his path and drew nearer to the source, he could hear the sound more clearly and had a guess as to its identity.

— — The crackling of flames.

Believing in this assumption, Sare become more determined in moving the rubble out of his way and quickly located the sound's origin.

Within the marble ruins, the hearthless [black flames] continued to burn.

Sare raised a brow in surprise, "Fulham Sanctos, the black flames of Sanctos Castle.....so it really doesn't ever go out...."

The black flames burned atop a large decorative silver plate as stood as high as he was tall. It was a sight he had seen any number of times.

As Sare looked upon the flames he remembered an old story that the older Majins had told him, full of pride.

— — [This flame has continued to burn for a thousand years.]

When Sanctos Castle was being constructed, the first emperor, the [founder], brought the black flame to life using sorcery. It was to stand as a symbol of the Majin's power, so he ordered that Majins would continue to worship it from then on.

Worship may not have been the expression he meant to use though.

Majins don't worship a god after all.

But, the founder's flames that have never gone out, despite not being fueled by anything, have an existence similar to a holy object equal in how they are revered.

It's a belief inherited from the first Majins whose country had just been recognized by the rest of the world. Every year during the festival of the [Fulham Sanctos] the flames were brought out from their place and carried about. It was a Majin custom.

— *Though I don't remember them carrying it around during the festivals I was around for.*

Even so, to Sare it was the only thing that remained that held memories for him.

Against the night wind, the Fulham Sanctos was an existence that softened the piercing cold.

— *In the end you're the last thing that remains at my side.*

Sare sat beside the black flames and again passed his time in a thoughtless daze.



And, like that, night descended.

Time waits for no one.

— — And holding out hope for miracles, like turning back time, is just unreasonable.



Sare, unable to ignore his body's natural desire to live, went into the forest to scrounge up something to eat.

But after eating, he returned to sitting motionlessly beside the black flames of Sanctos Castle.

As time continued to pass in this way, his vitality was slowly fading away.

After this, what should I do?

What is left to guide me?

Is there any sign as to where I should go from here?

— — *Don't avoid thinking about it. Focus.*

If Sare continue to avoid thinking about the future he would just end up remaining in the ruins of his life, never bothering to accomplish anything.

Using his fading energy, Sare forced himself to focus properly on the problem at hand.

— — *It's useless to go to Atem Kingdom. They obviously have at least enough strength to slaughter a hundred Majins.*

Because I am all alone, if they find me I'll be killed.

As much as I'd love to go after my family's enemy, I'm not stupid enough to think I have the power to do it.

“The enemy’s a whole country after all— —”

One person vs. a kingdom.

From what Alfred said, it’s quite a large kingdom at that. Even if I was truly insane I would still acknowledge it as a fool’s mission.

— —Greetings, I’m a tragic protagonist, would you please lead me to the king of Atem so I can have revenge?

“If that worked it’d be a pretty cheap tragedy, huh?”

First of all, who the hell would just lead me to the king?

And for argument’s sake, if I killed him, then what?

Well, I’d feel quite refreshed for one.

But then I’d be known as a criminal and spend the rest of my life on the run.

— —Haha, still, that wouldn’t be too bad, would it?

Just as Sare thought this, those words came to mind:

[We, your family, would never wish for you to be exposed to such danger.]

Alfred’s words. Sare could almost hear his voice speaking them aloud.

— —I can’t handle this burden, Alfred.

You told me I could come back if I couldn't bear the responsibility.

But I no longer have a home to return to.

Because my home was where Alfred and the others were.

“.....damn it.”

By keeping his mind engaged in such thoughts, Sare's body was slowly regaining its energy. He used this energy to bang his fists against the ground in frustration.

——Keep thinking.

The Atem Kingdom came and challenged the Majins. As a result, all the Majins in the castle had died.

Alfred had said it once before. That the Irudoe domain could no longer call itself an “empire.” It no longer had the qualities of a proper country.

Irudoe domain's neighbor——the Atem Kingdom, defeated the Majins. Which meant:

——The Irudoe domain was practically Atem territory at this point.

Only one Majin is still alive in this domain after all.

I no longer have any guarantee as to my personal safety.

Rather, if I stay here, the power of my life or death would be in the palm of the king of Atem's hand.

Just thinking about it brought to Sare's mind the smallest bud of a passionate idea.



“— —I'll go against that kind of fate.”



Sare's rebellious though gave him the feeling that even if he were left to a fate held in the hands of the king of Atem, he could still manage to draw out the power to resist.

— —Even if I can only desperately claw at the those hands.

Just thinking that he had options was a relief.

— —Whatever allows me to survive.

I shouldn't confuse my priorities. Any thoughts of going after enemies comes after I've moved forward. It's fine to wait for the right moment, but for now I should focus on survival.

— —If that's the case, I'm the fool for choosing to stay here.

As soon as he was determined to leave Sanctos Castle, Sare began to put in order the deaths of his family.

It may have seemed foolish and unreasonable— —but until he sorted out his feelings, he felt that his body would refuse to move forwards.

That's why— —

“Alfred, Lilian, my family—everyone has died.”

He finally said it out loud.

Sare no longer had connections,

—to anyone still alive.



Now that Sare had the determination to leave the castle, he began to make preparations.

He would leave behind everything except his luggage, that is, the contents of the leather bag prepared by Alfred and Lilian for his journey.

Sare upended the bag and went through the contents; checking what was important but unessential, and what was important and best to keep close at hand. Once he had rearranged and repacked the leather bag he crouched next to the flames and picked up the silver plate above which the [black flames of Sanctos Castle] floated.

He carefully set it aside with the rest of his things and then turned his gaze upon the ruins of Sanctos Castle.

—most of what remained had been buried.

He placed one hand over his eyes briefly, thought of something especially painful, and purposely, with his uncovered eyes, invoked the eye of destruction: Gram Istooru.

“—[Break]”

Sare carefully began to disassemble the useless, broken parts of Sanctos Castle by focusing on the areas where its balance was the worse. The unstable parts of

the foundation were carefully chipped away. Bit by bit the intimidating pile of rubble that buried the castle became smaller and smaller.

“——alright,” he said with a nod.

Sare had given himself access to the previously inaccessible areas. The remaining rubble he then removed by hand.

After a few hours, Sare had created a somewhat safe path that allowed him access to the interior of the remains of Sanctos Castle.

He wore his bag on his shoulder, and carried the silver plate with both hands, the [black flames of Sanctos Castle] still floating above it.



Once he had successfully entered the somewhat safe areas within Sanctos Castle’s remains, Sare began to search out a room that was still mostly intact.

He picked one of the several rooms that met this criteria.

Sare set the silver plate that bore the black flame on the ground, and sat down nearby it. He invoked his maryoku into his index finger and used it to draw a [sorcery formula] onto the marble floor.

Slowly, so as not to make a mistake.

Seriously and confidently he carved the formula into the marble.

For a few hours he carefully engraved the seal of that very first Majin sorcery technique.



——At some point in the future, these black flames, first created by the founding emperor, might serve an important purpose.

In that vein of thought, in order to properly utilize that technique, some

[preparations] needed to be undertaken.

After Sare had finally completed the formula he had engraved on the ground, he felt a sense of urgency— —took a deep breath and muttered:

“It’ll hurt a lot, but it can’t be helped.”

He removed the clothing on his upper body and took hold of the knife strapped to the small of his back. Silently, he thrust the tip of the knife into his right shoulder— —the blade cut easily. He started a bit as the blade pierced his skin.

“.....tch!”

It was an act of self-mutilation.

That it would be painful was obvious, but each time the sharp blade was drawn along his skin the intense pain would force him to shut his eyes and groan aloud.

— —*Don’t move, hold on, carve it carefully.*

Carve it, carve it, carve it. Like a silent prayer Sare repeated those words over and over in his mind each time he drew the knife against the skin of his right shoulder.

It began at his right shoulder, but descended down his right arm, the knife continued to add to the edges as it expanded, it even appeared as if the skin of his arm weren’t enough to contain what he was carving.

Of course, if you pierce your body fresh blood will flow; every time Sare pierce his right shoulder with the blade there was a wave of heat and pain.

What Sare was carving along the whole of his arm was a [sorcery formula].

Sare was carving the same sorcery formula carved along the edges of the silver

place that held Sanctos' black flames into his own body. It was a large and complex formula.

To anyone who happened to be watching nearby, it would look like he was committing an unreasonable act.

——But if he were to carve it with his maryoku, like the floor, it would simply fade away.

That's because, in Sare's body flowed maryoku, the same maryoku that would be used if he were to draw the technique formula with the tip of his finger. It was kind of an annoyance...

.....because it would just fade away.

Due to the torrent of maryoku flowing within him, anything drawn on him with maryoku would be reabsorbed and fade within a couple of hours.

What Sare wanted was a formula on his body that would never disappear.

That is how Sare came to the conclusion that he had to carve the formula into himself with a physical [wound].

But, even by doing it [this] way the sorcery formula would soon disappear.

——It was a convenient, but at the same time inconvenient, body.

While continuing to silently chant that prayer in his mind in order to stay focused, Sare carefully kept his gaze on his arm.

A truly frightening ability of the Majins, their [resilience], was in full effect.

As soon as he caused his skin to split by the knife, it would quickly close up——the inherent resilience possessed by Majins.

Because of this, Sare had to carve the formula again and again into his body.

Even with the recovery granted by the Majin's resilience, because he persisted

in carving the formula over and over, scars began to remain.

He continued to carve into his body until he could see each scar clearly.

But the pain and blood loss couldn't be ignored forever.

As time had passed the right side of Sare's body had been dyed red, the blade of his dagger was similarly coated in blood.

As soon as he finished carving the last bit of the formula his willpower deserted him, and Sare collapsed.

He fell over as if he was praying to the black flames of Sanctos Castle— —and soon began to breathe deeply as he fell asleep.



“— —Please do not be so unreasonable, Sare.”

Alfred?

“If you had let me known earlier, I would have done it for you.”

Don't say that with such a happy face. It would hurt the same no matter who did it.

“Hahaha, that is true, but I wanted to be able to see it— —”

“Brother, your love, is warped.”

“If Lilian has to scold me, I guess I will have to resist saying such things.”

To begin with, you shouldn't say things like that so boldly.

“Well, it is our fault that you were forced to do such a thing.”

“Sorry Sare.”

Don't worry about it. I was the one who wanted to do it. I'm fine. Instead——

“Oh yes. There was one thing I forgot to tell you before. I wanted to give you one more name.”

——Name?

“——[Sanctos]. The same name as the castle. A name passed down to each Irudoe emperor. I would like you to succeed this name. ——For those who receive it, the name bequeaths a divine protection, as if the name is saying: please protect this one. ——We Majins do not follow any gods so perhaps that divine protection has faded, but I want to you have whatever protection remains to the Majin race.”

——Haha, what a grandiose name.

“Fufu, so it is. ——Now then, it is not good for us to keep you here too long so you should hurry back. You should not return here again.”

“See you Sare.”



“Wait.....please wait——”

Sare awoke while stretching his hand out into the empty air.

— — *So it was a dream.*

What a terrible dream.

— — *That sort of thing will just weaken my resolve.*

“Haa.....” Sare sighed.

He casually raised his right arm. When he looked at it the sorcery formula was clearly visible against his skin. For the time being, it seems the carving of the formula was a success.

Sare once again donned his new clothes and stood up.

Just once he glanced at the [black flames of Sanctos Castle] which burned above the silver plate and said,

“— — Let’s go. This way we can go together.”

Sare then invoked the now horribly swelling sorcery formula carved on his right arm to call the black flames. — — They quickly appeared above the palm of his right hand.

There was a gap between where they flickered and his palm.

As Sare’s flames flickered Sanctos’ flames seemed to flare in excitement from their place nearby.

For just a moment the formula carved on Sare’s right arm and the sorcery formula drawn on the floor near the silver plate sparkled.

Then, once it seemed that the radiance had faded, for just a moment, the black flames were [absorbed] into Sare’s right palm.

Sare took a moment to check his body's condition before he was satisfied.

“——Ok.”

With a short affirmation, Sare lightly brushed the darkening scars of the formula on his right arm before saying farewell to Sanctos Castle.



After leaving the castle, Sare once again considered his dream and rifled through his bag.

“...Alfred, is definitely no longer alive, right?”

As he made a mess of the bag's contents and stacked up various things, a single piece of paper fluttered to the ground:

[I want you to succeed the name [Sanctos]. A name first given by the founder to the subsequent emperors, from the previous generation's emperor to me, and from me to you. Live with both this name and the divine protection of the Majin race which it holds. ——[Sare Sanctos Satana].

Or so it was written.

After that it said:

[Finally, I also declare you as Irudoe's emperor. Although it does not really mean much at this point, perhaps in the future it will be of some use to you. Use this position however you like in order to survive. The [Imperial Sword] I have given to you is proof of your status as the emperor, so please take good care of it. ——Ah, I was a little parent-like just now, was I not?]

From the previous generation's Irudoe emperor,
Albert Sanctos Satana.

— — Sare gave a small smile.

TN: Because this is a Japanese narration the PoV changes from 1st to 3rd person quite often. As a result, I edited 1st person like mental thoughts in italics and changed some stuff so that descriptions and whatnot were normal 3rd person. It should read easier.

Also, the writer may have written the prologue separate from the main story because the writing style changed quite a bit and some info was repeated from chapter 05.

Lastly, after Sare has the dream he starts speaking with just a little itty bit of regal language. I thought it was kinda cute.

Chapter 07: Those Who Go Against the Flow of the World [1/2]

—A sudden surprise encounter and a choice which could decide the rest of one's life.



As Sare was practically finished with his preparations, thinking *Now then, where should I go?* he suddenly felt as if someone was approaching.

A sound, a presence. It was enough of a change in the air to alert him.

To free his arms he lifted up his bag and hung it from one shoulder as he went into action trying feel for the location of the presence.

Sare's body reacted immediately as if it knew exactly how to prepare for whatever sort of danger might be on the horizon.

There was a high likelihood that the ten-odd years of intense training he had undergone had contributed to how easily he went into action.

—*What is it? No, who is it?*

He drew the Imperial Sword from the scabbard hanging on his left side and hid himself in the shadows in order to secretly observe the area.



The presence of approaching bodies came closer to his location bit by bit.

—*Voices.*

The sound of [speaking] was somewhat mixed into the normal noises of the forest, but the words slowly became clearer as they approached.



"Do you really think anyone lives in a remote place like this?"

"It seems so. I felt *maryoku* earlier."

"*Maryoku*? —Is there any chance it's someone from the Pure race?"

“If the people of the Pure race were born with *maryoku* we’d have all died out by now I’m sure. In all probability it’s someone from an other race.

“Hmmm....well, we can only hope that they are a member of a race that is willing to communicate.”

“Who cares, by the way, it’s seems we’ve come *preeeetty* far, huh?”

“It has been several weeks since we initially met after all. In any case, can you stop speaking so familiarly with me as if we were close friends? It’s bothersome.”

“W, well aren’t you awfully cold! I’m maybe just a little offended....”

“It has been awhile since I last heard you speak this cheekily——”



Sare could hear these three voices coming from directly in front of him.

There were any number of other voices that made themselves heard as the group approached.

Since they were using words, they were likely all members of humanoid races.

The voices came even closer.

They would arrive any minute.



“I just remembered. This area, in the past, was home to the Majin race, the Ehno Ayla. I think their country was called——the Irudoe Empire. I heard that their numbers dwindled after a war with Atem, but I wonder if some of them are still alive? ——Uwah....Majins huh....even in this day and age they still seem a bit scary.”

“The Majin race was it? Even I have heard of the ferociousness of that race.”

“Ah—! I know a buncha stuff about ‘em! Like how that Iru-something Mr. Emperor destroyed a whole country a long time ago, and tricked a god into fighting! I’ve heard about it before! Everyone says they’re suuper scary!”

“Now now, you are only pointing out their violent points. They were trusted enough to be at peace with the Pure race, so they may wish to live peacefully in their hearts.”

“Sorry to interrupt, but can you guys keep quiet for a moment....”



— — *That’s a lot of people, huh?*

Sare eavesdropped from the shadows.

There were so many voices it was hard to follow what was being said.

At first glance they didn’t appear to be the type of people that would be hostile, but he didn’t even have enough information to form a clear hypothesis on the matter. It was best to stay wary and prepared.

When Sare felt confident enough to lean out of the shadows, so he could to see the group, the main speakers were just coming close enough to be seen.

Sare took the risk of being slightly exposed in order to get a clearer glimpse of them.

His curiosity demanded that he discover the appearance of the voices he heard.

What kind of weapons did they hold? What kind of clothes did they wear? What kind of armor? What sort of race were they?

— — *What kind of people were they?*

When he was able to see them closely, Sare could only stare in mute amazement.

— — *What is that?*

Their appearances were shocking enough to render Sare completely dumfounded.

To Sare they had completely unfamiliar features.

Unnatural features.

At one glance, he could safely assume that their unique characteristics marked them as members of various [other races].

To start with there was:

One with a single horn protruding from their head.

One with the body of a person but the head of a lizard.

One who had the ears of an animal.

One with a partially transparent right arm.

One with a pair of large white wings on their back.

One with a tail.

— — *Ah, but I have one of those as well.*

In any case, it was a strange yet spectacular group.

Diverse. Surely they represented that word to perfection.

Suddenly Sare realized he was hanging out too far in his dumb stupor and quickly pulled his head back into the shadows.

So that no one could see him.

Almost immediately after this a voice spoke from the group.

“Let us pause for a moment, my friends.”

“Whatever is the matter?”

“This place bears the stench of death.”

“Suuper smelly!”

The whole group came to a stop.

Practically right on top of where he was hiding in the shadows of rubble.

“Hmph, who goes there?”

In the silence that followed the question Sare gave in to his curiosity and peered slightly out from behind the rubble, when he did he accidentally locked eyes with the lizard-headed race man.

The lizard-headed man, who had been the one who spoke, seemed to slowly lose patience and began to quickly approach the rubble where Sare was hiding.

— — *Whoops.*

Ah, well, why was I hiding again?

I didn't want to just reveal myself to the unexpected, and somewhat odd, company, but instead I became a suspicious person...

Realizing that, Sare mentally prepared himself and stepped out from the shadows.

As soon as he did so, the whole group immediately went into battle mode.

“An ambush...!! Are you a member of the Pure race?!”

“Just a moment. You’re deciding guilt too quickly.”

“E, even so.....”

“We are not wild beasts, let us try and talk this out first. Afterwards we can judge the situation more appropriately.”

With just one hand a woman with gray hair calmed the lizard-head man’s charge and stepped out from the shelter of the group.

In a monotone voice with an air of nonchalance, the young woman turned her weak and indifferent gaze towards Sare.

Pale crimson eyes.

So we're going to talk this out first, huh?

Sympathizing with her words, Sare returned the Imperial Sword to its scabbard and dropped his hands to his sides.

At the sight of this, the other visitors who had accepted the young woman's words kept an eye on Sare's sword and reluctantly relaxed their own battle postures.

When Sare returned his sword to his sheath the gray-haired young woman raised an eyebrow.

Watching her, Sare noticed something about the young woman's gaze.

There was a bit of a delay when she would shift it.

Rather than reacting to Sare as he was sheathing the Imperial Sword, she reacted to the metallic sound as it was returned to its sheath.

"——Your eyes, are you blind?" Sare blurted out as his introduction.

"Yes, I am blind."

——Is what she said, but it sounded more like "So what?"

It feels like I just killed the conversation, Sare scolded himself mentally.

"Let's just get the conversation back on track, shall we? ——Nice to meet you. I am known as [Alice Art]. If possible, may I have your name?"

"———Sare."

He almost said Sare Satana, but then remembered the dream and the note,
“——Sare Sanctos Satana,” he finished.

“Thank you very much. May I call you Sare-san? Please call me Alice.”

From start to finish the gray-haired young woman called Alice’s voice was completely monotone.

“.....Sanctos? Hmmm.....I have a feeling I’ve heard that from somewhere.....”
Said a young man in the group wearing glasses as he tilted his head in deep thought.

“Sanctos....Satana.....——Ah!”

“Have you recalled something?”

“The Irudoe emperor we were talking about before! The Majin who destroyed a whole country! [Gazel Sanctos Satana]. I think he was the third emperor of the Majin race——”

“Which makes this person his descendent.”

“Probably.”

Without saying anything himself, Sare’s origins were decided.

“Meito-san, Gillius-san, do you think this is the appropriate time to begin such discussions?” Alice scolded.

“Ah, s-sorry.” (Meito)

“M-my humblest apologies....” (Gillius)

Alice gave a sigh of exasperation, even though her face was still expressionless, and turned back towards Sare.

“I apologize Sare-san.”

“Don’t worry about it. That name is something I take pride in,” Sare paused before continuing, “but what that guy in glasses said is the truth, I’m a Majin.”

Sare said it assertively.

There was no real reason he had to keep this fact a secret.

He felt he could reveal it to Alice and the others, who seemed fairly amiable— —at least at the moment.

When Sare revealed his race to the others the group broke out in noisy chatter.

“[They really exist?] [It’s the first time I’ve seen someone from the Majin race.] [But there’s only one.] [A violent and rare race, huh?],” and so on.

Also, as they carried on, Sare didn’t overlook the doll-like Alice’s face as her brow rose higher and higher until a crease appeared on her brow.

“Please disregard their disagreeable ramblings. I once again apologize to you.”
(Alice) “Ah, well, it’s fine. — —Rather, I have a few things I’m curious about. That is— —” (Sare)

— —Lizard-head. Horn. Animal ears. White wings.

Sare trailed off rather than directly ask about them.

At the same time Alice bowed her head and apologized, the others in the group seemed to realize that Sare wasn’t emitting any sort of malice towards them.

— —He had no intention of fighting.

They quickly rushed to this conclusion and rallied their spirits as they noticed

Sare's merits as a comrade and waited for Alice to speak.

"What shall I do everyone? I would very much enjoy talking with Sare-san some more..." (Alice) "I see. I have no qualms with allowing Alice this opportunity." (Gillius) "Neither do I."

Other voices of agreement were raised from the group.

"I understand. —Sare-san, would you allow us to stop here for awhile?"

At first Sare had nodded while making a noise of approval but halfway through he remembered that she couldn't see and instead awkwardly said: "Ahh— it's fine with me."

"So he says everyone. For the time being I will entrust you all to keep a close lookout."

At her words came an energetic "Yes ma'am" from everyone within the group.

Sare would have liked to ask Alice to take a seat, but all that was behind him was the remains of Sanctos Castle sitting snugly within a mountain of rubble. The ground was also uneven and rough.

Sare hung his head for a moment and leaned himself against a piece of rubble in frustration.

"I'd offer you a seat if possible, but everything is a bit of a mess—"

"Please do not worry about me."

"Sorry about that. Well, I wonder if this would work. —Excuse me for a moment."

Sare hesitated a moment before taking the blind girl's hand and guiding her. Her hand was pleasant and cool to the touch, but above all it was very small, so small that it felt it would break if he gripped too hard.

Sare guided Alice by her hand and brought her to a spot where she could sit.

— — *I've met a truly interesting a mysterious person*, Sare thought at he watch the ever-polite Alice put her clothes in order as she sat on her knees with her hands properly laying atop them.

For the past few days he'd been completely alone, and now there was another person seated beside him.

Such a strange visitor's presence caused the gaping hole in Sare's heart to shiver slightly— —and initiate the very beginnings of recovery.



"Well, since we're here may I ask you a question?"

"Go right ahead."

"Sare-san, have you ever left the Irudoe domain?"

"No."

"— — I see. That explains your surprise at our appearances."

"That explains,' you say. Wait, how could you tell I was surprised?"

Sare didn't explicitly say "But aren't you blind?" but the implication of what he said was obvious enough.

"I guess, if I were to explain it simply, I could hear your surprise in the tone of your voice," Alice replied in response to his unasked but implied question. She continued, "Nowadays it is rare to encounter someone who doesn't know of the

[Other races]. Even people who live far removed from society know about the Other races from information from travelers or gossip.”

“Other races?”

“In simple terms they are what every other race besides the Pure race are called.”

“I see,” Sare said somewhat to himself.

“I will get straight to my main point. Sare-san, do you have any interest in leaving the Irudoe domain?”

“Yeah. I was just preparing to leave when you arrived. This place....there’s nothing left for me here.”

“——Is that so?”

“——It is so.”

Sare accidentally replied in a similarly disinterested tone to slightly tease Alice.

He wasn’t trying to be sarcastic, but he prepared himself for any anger she might vent at him for parroting her words.

Sare mentally scolded himself for speaking to Alice this way at their first meeting. Although Alfred and the others used to exchange quite a bit of sarcasm in their day-to-day battle of wits, it wasn’t something Sare should have tried with this girl he had just met.

With reluctance, Sare tried to read Alice’s face to see if she was upset.

——*Uwah....she didn’t react at all....*

Alice was sitting with her hands resting on her knees as before; her facial expression hadn’t changed in the least.

Without any hesitation she returned to the conversation at her own pace.

“Well then, there is another matter I would like to inquire about.”

“Ah.....yes.....”

At the sight of her constantly expressionless face Sare felt a bit of chagrin at being unable to fluster her at all while waiting for her next words.



“Do you have any interest in travelling with us?”



— — *My patience has been rewarded with Alice’s strong offensive strategy.*

From behind her iron wall of expressionlessness she launched her powerful words at Sare and interrupted his comparatively weak and simple inner thoughts.

This girl will definitely become a great negotiator.Definitely.

“.....Well, how do I put it, I’d like to discuss things a bit more before answering that— —” (Sare)

Alice’s straightforward approach couldn’t interrupt Sare’s thoughts forever. Once he had recovered his train of thought he tried to state his reservations.

“I should have mentioned this at the beginning, but staying here is dangerous for the Other races. This domain is neighboring on the Atem Kingdom after all.”

I can totally understand that.

That’s why I was going to leave Irudoe.

“Just recently the Atem Kingdom made a proclamation on [Pure supremacy] to all the surrounding countries.”

“...Proclamation?”

“Correct. — —A proclamation regarding the [Other race subjugation plan] being initiated within Atem’s territory.”

Sare’s heart skipped a beat.

Chapter 08: Those Who Go Against the Flow of the World [2/2]

No way, thought Sare.

The words Alice had spoken——the [Other races subjugation plan].

Alfred and the others were most likely killed because of this plan.

Or, the eradication of the Majin race was needed to begin the plan.

Well, at this point the reasoning doesn't really matter. For whatever reason the end result was that the Majin race was swept from the stage.

“We are——those who have lost someone due to the [Other races subjugation plan]. We have been brought together as a result of this plan. Day by day our numbers have increased, but a month hasn't even passed since we began.”

——How surprising.

Hearing the truth of their situation, Sare was surprised because the group appeared so close and everyone seemed so deeply tied to one another.

“Not even one month? Even though you all get along so well?”

“I dare to say that our close connections are due to [substitution]. We have all lost our connections to our brethren. Perhaps these new connections formed quickly to [substitute] the bonds that were lost?”

As someone similar to the members of this group, Sare could see his own feelings match well with Alice's explanation.

Sare could definitely understand that way of thinking.

“At some point I was placed in the center of this group. While our connections may be because of an act of substitution, I have a different idea as to why I became the focus.”

“What would that be?”

“I cannot see or proceed on my own. I also lack any power. I am an existence that needs protection. I think that everyone felt a need to protect me and focused their attentions on me; protecting me became their duty, their responsibility, and it brought everyone’s unique wills together in solidarity. In the face of their solidarity——I became something like the leader of the group, though I do not hold such a position in actuality——”

“That is not the real truth of the matter.” A voice suddenly called out from somewhere off to the side.

When he looked towards the source of the voice Sare saw a black-haired beauty who had a single horn growing from her head.

With black hair reached all the way to the small of her back, her appearance was quite breathtaking.

“Though half of what you have said is correct, me thinks the other half is false. Milady never looks at things in a selfish manner. Rather, we believe that milady’s predictions are not just correct, but that milady decides our future paths with absolute impartiality and fairness.”

In reply to the horned beauty Alice replied,

“[Touka]-san, your words refer to the story that I possess powers of prediction, correct?”

“Fumu, at the beginning we simply gave milady’s predictions a chance, but after observing your leadership these past few weeks there can be no doubt that milady’s decisions are the right ones. So we have decided to continue to trust your decisions. ——Though it is sooth that our bonds are new and somewhat

frail.”

After saying this the black-haired, one-horned beauty, [Touka], turned her gaze towards Sare.

“You are called Sare, are you not? As you are alone, won’t you come with us? There’s no denying that traveling in a group is comforting, even if you are capable of defending yourself. Your stronghold here looks like it might collapse at any moment but perhaps, for you, it is better than nothing. Yet, when you need to be saved a stronghold has no reason or desire to protect you——”

Touka looked at Sare as she tried to seduce him with her strangely old-fashioned style of speaking despite her young age.

There doesn’t seem to be a catch——but what should I do?

From what they’ve said they’re a very eye-catching group of people who could be arrested on sight.

A collapsing stronghold.

Or a group with no purpose.

Who gathered coincidentally with no real aim.

What could I stand to gain if I joined up with this group?

Sare could just easily calculate the relative benefit or disadvantage joining would get him, but there was a nagging thought that urged him to ask,

“Do you really——have no purpose? ——Truly none?”

“There are goals but our paths to achieve them are still unknown.” Touka spoke confidently while wearing a smile.

Even the way she breathed was bewitching,

“— —Well....it is not as if milord’s suspicions are entirely unfounded. Within our group are many races but no single goal. But more important than these goals is our situation. We have been forced to travel while avoiding the regions influenced by the leader of the country that initiated the Other race subjugation plan: Atem Kingdom’s king.”

Touka nodded at her own words with an [Umu].

“We have just about— —reached our limit.”



“That is true. Although we have just been introduced to one another, perhaps it’s already time to talk about this. Sare-san, you of course reserve the right to refuse,” Alice began.

“As I mentioned before this area is quite dangerous for those of the Other races at the moment. Whether or not you accept our invitation, it would be prudent for us to change locations.”

Sare was still somewhat hesitant.

Before joining their group, he’d want to know all the details first. Everything depends on the degree of differences between his goals and theirs.

They seemed like a group that could easily fall apart.

He wanted a bit more time to consider things.

Sare’s mouth moved to ask for time to think about all this, but— —

“Fufufu.....!! Are there a bunch of useless cretins over here discussing things above them?! Oooh, there are! That’s totally what you’re doing! — —with Sare

something something!!”

Before Sare could ask his question a woman suddenly appeared directly in front of him and spoke while striking an arrogant pose.

A woman who spoke in a loud, shrill voice with hair shining like gold thread and [six large white wings] that fluttered in a showy manner.

She took a prideful breath [*fufun*] and smiled cheerfully as she continued.

“You! Before you, stands a *SUPER*, absolutely *gorgeous*, utterly *noble* member of the Heaven race——Reg Nahdo, yet you haven’t introduced yourself?! ——Ehhh, what’s wrong with you?! Even if you’re just a cretin that’s awfully impertinent of you!!”

——*E, ehhh.....so hyper.....*

Even though he was still in shock from her sudden appearance and the even more surprising accusation that he was a cretin, Sare managed to respond.

“W, well, that is, saying that so suddenly——”

“What are you saying?! ‘Suddenly’ means that it’s no good?! ——How ridiculous!! Where on earth is there someone so impertinent as to say that I’m in the wrong?! It’s you, isn’t it?! Sa—— something something!” **1**

This girl, she forgot the [re] already. Didn’t you just call me [Sare] before.....?!
Sare thought to himself as the white winged girl went off again.

“Well, aren’t you going to throw yourself on the ground and beg for my forgiveness?! Well?! Hurry up and get to it!!”

“Well, you know, I never really said you were in the wrong, you know?!”

— — *You just took it upon yourself to come to that conclusion!! I haven't done anything wrong either!!*

The white-winged girl suddenly got up in Sare's face and pressed herself against him in anger as if she was yelling *[Hey, hey, hey!]*².

"[Premiere]-san, you are no longer making any sense, please shut your mouth."

Alice suddenly intervened with her always expressionless face and monotone, if somewhat poisonous, voice.

"Oho, is that Alice? It sounds as if I'm talking nonsense again, does it?
— — Fufufu.....!! It's impossible for me to speak nonsense! Never in my life have I heard such a thing! I speak with absolute clarity! And nobility!" (Premiere)

"No, the conversation has definitely become ridiculous." (Alice)

"What is this, why if't isn't the meddlesome Premi. Thee should really refrain from speaking so oft....." (Touka)

"You shut your mouth Touka. — — Should I break off that horn of yours? Well? Should I?! — — It's decided, I'm gonna break it off!!" (Premiere)

"I'm not really concerned as to whether you break off Touka-san's horn or not, but you're being quite a bother. I would be pleased if you could go somewhere else for the time being." (Alice)

"Wha-! Alice! Milady, what do you think my horn is?!" (Touka)

"I see....I dare say, if I were grilling and in need of a skewer it might do well as a replacement. I think I could easily fit three delicious things: meat, onion, and meat. It would be somewhat useful. Only somewhat though." (Alice)

"Oho! There's a good idea! Well said Alice! Let's immediately give it a try!" (Premiere)

"You two.....!!" (Touka)

“That’s how it is, so please go give it a try somewhere over there at once, let’s not wait for the next time, please go be a bother somewhere I cannot see. No matter what you decide, I would be pleased if you went somewhere else for the time being.” (Alice)

“Understood! At once! Yes! Let’s go use Touka’s horn as a skewer at once!!”
(Premiere)

All of a sudden Sare was no longer trapped within the previously puzzling scene.

He waited in wide-eyed amazement.

The white-winged girl named Premiere grabbed Touka by the horn and dragged her over to where the Other race group members were still guarding and there was silence for a few moments after their departure before Alice spoke again,

“I apologize for the fuss, Sare-san.”

“Eh, ah, yeah....”

“As you just experienced, our group’s current condition contains surprising people and also...”

——*Eh? Also what?Is there something else I need to worry about?*

“I, I see.....”

“There are quite a few members whose personalities are somewhat dark. While the surprising ones are somewhat unnecessary———those dark ones who speak poisonously are similarly unacceptable.”

——*Is she actually saying this? Why don’t you correct what you just finished saying a few moments ago? I mean, aren’t you calling yourself unacceptable?!*

“In any case, well, how should I put it.....what do you say? That is, about the invitation I mentioned before?” Alice deftly returned to the previous topic. “You do not have to stay until we’ve found a place of refuge, but are you at least interested in traveling with us for awhile?”

“Well——” Sare paused for just a moment.

“———Sure.” He finished with a nod.

After hearing the series of conversations just now, he changed his previous decision on the matter.

“I guess I’ll be in your care.”

——*It’s [interesting].*

Interesting things kept gushing forth from these people.

It wasn’t as if he was fond of the strong personalities of the two who had wandered away from the conversation, but he was interested. ——He had become intrigued.

What kind of race were they? What sort of beliefs did they hold? What was their eventual destination?

“We are glad to have you. Although it may appear to be a frail bond, from this point forward you are our [companion].”

Sare embraced the words Alice spoke.

——*I think I’m actually quite fortunate.*

At least in terms of acquiring new bonds.

Sare had only just begun to organize his feelings after the tragedy.

He would never forget about Alfred and the others.

But there was no point in just focusing on the past— —

— — If he did that, Lilian would scold him.

For a moment, Sare thought he could hear Lilian telling him to [Take care].



“So, we have acquired a new companion.” Alice informed the others after she had stood up and walked over to them.

The group immediately was filled with noisy conversation, but rather than hearing voices of uncertainty or negative feelings, Sare instead got the impression that he was well-received.

He stood next to Alice and gave his introduction,

“— — Please take care of me from now on.”

The older Majins had always told him that manners were essential in life, and Sare kept his words polite as to deliver a courteous greeting. First impressions are important.

— — *Aah, but sometimes first impressions can be the worst.*

Within the bustle of the group the silhouettes of two certain individuals stood out.

“I see, thou shalt travel with us. I desire thee to take care of me as well.”

(Touka)

“Hey now, Touka? You realize that running away will do you no good?! Hurry up and hand over that horn!” (Premiere)

“Cease these acts immediately, Premi! ‘Tis breaking! ‘Tis breaking!!” (Touka)

Once again the two beautiful women, who were still teamed up together despite their complaints and obvious incompatibility, stood within the group and reaffirmed Sare’s assessment that first impressions can be the worst.

“Ah, Sa——something? You’re——coming along then?”

“It’s Sare. You said it right the first time, so at least manage to remember it from now on.”

Despite Sare’s request the white-winged beauty——Premiere——beautifully ignored his words and went on her own tangent.

“Fine! Then, from now on you are my cretin No.50! To start with, can you please prostrate yourself on the ground?! Allow me to sit on your back!”

“N-no way!”

——*Why? I’m not even really going against her, am I?*

She previously called herself a [Heaven race], but rather than a benevolent angel, she’s more like tyrant?

——*Ah! Rather than this sort heavenly being, I’d really love to see a fairy tale-like righteous and graceful angel!*

“Sare-san, rather than getting trapped in her ridiculous dialogue I recommend always ignoring whatever she says.” Alice said in a very poisonous, sharp, and

Alice-like manner.

“Now then——” (Alice)

“Hm? What is it?” (Sare)

“I’d like to speak regarding an unspoken agreement we all follow in this group, but how should I go about it. It’s unspoken, so if I just blatantly tell you does it lose its meaning I wonder——Let’s put it this way: there are many and varied races in our group, so please don’t just casually inquire as to past issues. Speaking carefree, similar to that idiot——ah, sorry, I misspoke——Premiere-san, may not be the best, but always holding back isn’t the right way either...” (Alice)

“Ah, I think I understand. Don’t ask for more information from others than what I’d be comfortable providing myself.” (Sare)

Sare took the chance to interrupt during the pause in Alice’s explanation.

He mostly agreed with the general idea.

Those who innocently ask questions may end up stomping all over someone else’s heart.

Watching Touka and Premiere had made him forget, but these people had all lost their important [bonds].

No one, not even a member of the group, should apply unneeded pressure on these people whose emotional wounds had still not healed.

Alice is quite observant.

By observant he wasn’t talking about her actual powers of [observation]; he hadn’t forgotten her blindness. Rather, he meant that she was very capable of understanding the inner feelings of the men and women around her.

Suddenly Sare noticed something——

“Alice, you seem to walk around quite naturally. Are you somehow able to

understand your surroundings?”

Alice gave a small nod after hearing Sare’s words.

“Yes. While it is true that my sight is gone, my other senses are more capable as a result. I can somewhat sense what is around me. Although, of course, I cannot comment on colors or other details.”

“I see.”

Now that he thought about it, what race did she belong to?

He tilted his head as he studied her.

She didn’t possess features that stood out, like the others.

She was exceedingly normal— —like someone from the Pure race would look.

— —Well, not that I’ve actually had the chance to really look at someone of the Pure race before.

But he had the feeling she looked like one just based on his opinion formed from all the information he had gleaned on the subject.

— —Sorta like, if I saw one I’d know it.

Because it wasn’t likely she would answer such a question, he decided to refrain as to not appear rude.

After all, she had just spoke to him about why such questions were taboo. It wouldn’t be a good idea to break the rule so quickly.

“Now then everyone.”

As Sare was thinking these things Alice spoke to call everyone’s attention.

“So far we have been traveling while avoiding the outskirts of Atem Kingdom’s territory——but what shall we do from here on out?” (Alice)

“Fumu, what shalt we do?” (Touka)

“Why don’t we start constructing my kingdom?! Yes! What a wonderful idea!!” (Premiere)

At Premiere’s words the entire group, in unison, cried, “Absolutely not!!”

——I’m worried about my future being in this group...

Sare thought as he hung his head.

1TN: *She says “sing” in Japanese rather than “say.” I guess because she’s a bird-brain?*

2TN: *Like a yakuza intimidating someone (according to anime at least).*

Chapter 09: The Sheer Cliff's War Proposal

"Oh my goodness, this is quite a problem," Alice said in a voice that didn't sound at all worried, and a face that didn't change expression at all.

"Let us take a moment to reorganize ourselves. We should reassess our situation and get some input from Sare-san." (Alice)

"Umu, I concur."

The one who agreed with Alice was the man with the head of a lizard. An honest-to-goodness lizard head.

But he didn't look like a plain or ordinary lizard, instead he had two fantastic horns growing from his head.

The lizard head approached Sare, who was standing next to Alice, and held out his hand. He was offering his greetings with a handshake.

"Let me formally introduce myself to you, Sare. My name is [Gillius]. I am proud to announce myself as a member of the [Dragunal], or Dragon race. 'Tis a rather rare race, but if I were to compare its rarity to that of Sare's own, the lino Ehla, it may not be rare at all."

"I don't think I'm all that amazing. —It's nice to meet you, Gillius."

No way, the Dragon race?

—Dragon?! —Even just the character is awesome!

Sare got excited thinking about it.

When you were suddenly presented with a race with the heads of lizards it would be kinda weird, but if you call them the Dragon race, they suddenly seem

really cool.

— — *Yep, guys love dragons.*

Gillius had black scales that seemed to rise above his skin, a thick tail, and two large wings on his back.

“My appearance is hardly subtle. Because of this I feel like I am only half a person....”

“I believe Gillius perfectly fulfills his job of surprising everyone we meet. There is no need for you to do anything, your presence alone completely crushes their bravery. — — Especially if it happens to be dark.”

“Ku! You are so cruel, Alice!”

“Not at all, I am simply stating the truth.”

“Alice cannot go easy on anyone....” came a voice from within the group which was still chattering amongst themselves about the question Alice asked earlier.

Suddenly Gillius was pushed aside and another person came before Sare.

“Truly, that Premi. What doest she think mine horn is? — — — — Nu, we were not able to conduct proper introductions due to Premi’s interference. Alloweth me to once again introduce myself: I am [Touka Yakou].”

It was Touka. The beauty with the horn and the long black hair.

“In case you were curious, my lineage originates from the East Continent, I am one of the Ogre Race, the Vaal Valka. I overheard your conversation before. In terms of rarity my race will not lose to the Dragon race. Though, if you were to compare its rarity to the Majin race it is not as impressive.” (Touka)

Touka spoke in an old-fashioned way, and was comfortably clad in a deep crimson kimono. Combined with her beauty, it was like she was surrounded by a bewitching atmosphere.

“Nice to meet you. By the way, about your horn——” (Sare)

“It’s perfect for grilling.” (Alice)

“Thou art mistaken!!” (Touka)

“Eh, I made a mistake?” Alice spoke earnestly and seemed disheartened by the information.

In comparison, Touka seemed as if she was being worn down.

“——G, gunu.... ‘tis a feature of the [Ogre race]. All Ogres grow horns on their heads. Not a single ogre hath ever used their horns to grill meat you know? ——You are mistaken, do you understand?” Touka’s tone changed as she advised Alice.

Compared to her normal austere way of speaking, Sare felt that her speech style had become somewhat patronizing.

“Well then, alloweth us to put aside discussions concerning mine horn. ——For now.”

Touka forcibly redirected the conversation.

“——Alloweth us instead to worry about our current state of affairs,” Touka asserted with a serious expression on her face as she crossed her arms in front of her.

Gillius, standing beside her, crossed his arms as well and spoke first:

“Well, first of all, our number one concern is that we are being pursued by the Pure race of Atem Kingdom.” (Gillius)

“Yes, we have been lucky to escape up until now. But if we make a single mistake——”

Alice paused for a moment,

“We will be annihilated,” she finished while wearing a serious expression.

“What on earth is going on in that head of yours, Alice...?!” (Gillius)

“I am merely voicing the hypothesis I believe to be most likely after careful deliberation. Do not let it bother you.” (Alice)

“I, I see.....” (Gillius)

“Alice’s predictions are usually on the mark, which makes what you said frightening...!” Gillius grumbled to himself.

“——Our second issue is that we have been running without considering our destination, a place where we will be able to live. We must consider what we will do from now on.” (Gillius)

At these words a new voice was heard from within the group.

The voice belonged to a slender young girl with animal ears on her head.

“Then, how about we take this opportunity to strike Atem Kingdom, since we are so close? If we manage to strike a heavy blow here, we may scare off our pursuers and say goodbye to running away in fear——”

The girl stopped mid-sentence as she noticed Sare.

She turned to face him, her expression seemed to say: *I haven't introduced myself, huh?*

“——I am [Makoto Shintoruu]. Like Touka I am a race from the East Continent. I am a Ruu Farce, one of the [Fox people]. It is nice to meet you, Sare.”

“Yeah, nice to meet you too.” (Sare)

“Her other name is [cutting board Makoto]. ‘Tis fine if thee desires to make a guess at her chest measurements.” (Touka)

“Like I’d do that!!” (Sare)

Makoto’s fox ears twitched at Touka’s words and her face flushed red.

That’s because Touka, who added [cutting board] to her name, was staring directly at her chest as she continued,

“Look, that sheer cliff is the saddest thing thee shalt ever see. Wither hast her breasts runneth off to....? Even though we both hail from the East Continent, if thee compared hers to mine.....a pity.” (Touka)

“Don’t say [....a pity] as if you’re concerned!! S, stop it! Don’t stare at my chest with those eyes!!” Makoto yelled in response while covering her chest with her arms.

“——I mean, why are we even talking about this?! Weren’t we having a serious conversation before?! Quit interrupting important conversations just so you can bother people by bluntly talking about things that might be a sensitive topic!”

Makoto's ear twitched as she continued to yell at Touka.

"So those are fox ears," Sare said to himself.

— I really wanna touch them.

From near the fighting Touka and Makoto another voice spoke out.

That white-winged angel, Premiere.

Her six large white wings fluttered as she spoke.

"We can return to the conversation but— it's impossible, Makoto." (Premi)

Up until now Premiere had been so hyper, but now she spoke calmly.

"There are barely fifty of us here. If we tried to go against Atem's military forces we wouldn't stand a chance. While it's true that we could win a battle of strength against individuals of the Pure race, we can't keep up with the power of their sheer numbers and—the [Oracles]. If we had enough strength to go against them, the Regnard would have never lost the war." (Premi)

"I see..." (Makoto)

"Ah, that's right, there's one more thing I want to add—you really are flat as a cutting board, huh? No matter how noble I may be it's sad to act as your followup. You're so pitifully lacking that you make mine more impressive you know?" (Premi)

"What the hell!! You were so serious before that I actually got a better opinion of you!! In the end you guys always have to talk about it!! Do you actually enjoy bullying me like this?! — Fine!! Have fun with your pointless growths! Those hanging blobs of fat!!" (Makoto)

"Ara, well aren't you being crude? Not only a cretin and a cutting board, you

also have a quick temper and are prone to jealousy? Can't you at least fix your temper and jealousy? — — Since it's impossible to cure the cretin and cutting board parts!! Fufufu...!!" (Premi)

"You guys! Isn't anyone on my side?!" (Makoto)

There wasn't anyone in the group willing to step into the squabble between women.

Certainly, getting involved wouldn't result in anything good, or so Sare thought.

— — Incidentally.

Just now Sare heard a word that wasn't part of his vocabulary, so he asked:

".....[Oracles]?"

He had no knowledge of the term.

Alice, standing beside him, tilted her head questioningly as she answered him,

"They are those who have received the divine protection of the Dios, the Divine race, Sare-san."

"Divine beings? — — Eh? You mean gods? In this day and age?" (Sare)

— — *That's impossible*, Sare thought frankly.

A god, or in other words, the Almighty.

If there was such a being in this world, there wouldn't be so much strife.

Rather than this world being guided by the Almighty, it was more like it had been warped.

“It is quite difficult to explain but those of the [Divine race] are not exactly gods. They are not almighty beings.” (Alice)

“As in they aren’t omnipotent?” (Sare)

“Something like that. If you were to define what the Divine race is like— —they are those who are closest to achieving omnipotence. There are divisions based on their abilities, such as [Gods of War] and the [Gods of Harvest]. In the subdivisions of those gods are those such as the [Sword God] and the [God of Rice]. Although they sound grandiose, if you remove their special powers, I believe that these existences would look no different than those of either the Pure or Other races.” (Alice)

“Oh?” Sare remarked with eyes glittering in excited curiosity.

“By the way, it is said that the realm of the gods is sealed within another dimension, called the [World of Gods: Ichthys] which will rise to overlap our own at the end of this era. Those of the Divine race are waiting, sealed within this dimension, until our current civilizations decline and the end of the age approaches.” (Alice)

“Eh? They’re sealed?!” Sare exclaimed in a voice full of amazement, rather than simple curiosity.

“In history books it is vaguely mentioned that the Divine race had existed in our world at the beginning of the current era. But their presence and guidance caused civilizations to develop at an unbelievable pace, that their people, those of the Pure and Other races, could not match. These civilizations were unbalanced and...” Alice stopped speaking as she drew her hands together for a moment, before continuing:

“Those of the Pure and Other races did not possess the knowledge to control

their own civilizations without the guidance of the Divine race, which they regretted. They feared that both the Pure and Other races would destroy themselves since civilization had progressed at such a rapid pace, so they sealed themselves into Ichthys.” (Alice)

“I see. Even if they were called divine, they still made mistakes,” Sare offered.

“That is correct. After the Divine race sealed themselves in Ichthys, they lent their power to the people in the our world. This was to weaken the superiority of the civilizations they left behind, which were abnormally advanced. It was their way of [compensating] the rest of the world.” (Alice)

“But in the end they were just lending out power randomly, huh?” Sare commented while smiling slightly.

“Which leads to the present day, where we call these people who have received the powers of the Divine race [Oracles]. Their powers are diverse and they are found in many different fields. This is so they can carefully observe and moderate progress. — — This is the result of the Divine race sealing themselves away,” Alice said as she gave a thumbs up with her right hand.

— — *I wonder why she seems kinda happy.* Sare wondered to himself before deciding not to ask her about it.

Just as Alice had finished her explanation Gillius spoke up,

“There are many Oracles within the Atem Kingdom. The leaders of Atem’s most powerful troops, the [King’s Blade], are all selected from the Oracles possessing the powers of the God of War. This is why the Other races always stayed on Atem’s good side, as it would be a simple matter for Atem to crush them if they opposed.”

“Does that mean that the Other races don’t have a lot of Oracles?” (Sare)

“They exist, but their numbers are few.” (Gillius)

Touka followed up Gillius' simple answer,

"Due to the variety of types of Other races and the various abilities they naturally possess, the Divine race hath chosen to lend more power to the Pure race. Although they mean well, I feel they art being narrow-minded. The mediator tends to be exceedingly tough on the Other races. — — Since we are discussing it, should we give it a try?" (Touka)

"Give it a try?" (Sare)

"Forming a contract with one of the Divine race. 'Tis surprisingly simple to open the gate to Ichthys. 'Tis not as if I am trying to bringeth one hither, but I doth know a technique to make simple contact with them," Touka said as she held out an index finger and continued,

"— — The god I am able call upon is named— — the [Tsukkomi God]," she stated proudly.

"Suspicious! That sort of god sounds really suspicious....!!" (Sare)

Ignoring Sare's cry, Touka took her finger and began to draw the formula on the ground.

She waited for a few moments afterwards before saying:

"Well then, I shalt open it."

All eyes on her, Touka spoke words softly that seemed to do something, although Sare didn't understand their meaning, and the formula on the ground quickly began to glow.

“It really is that simple....” (Sare)

Sare was kind of happy, but also kind of sad, a complex series of emotions ran through him as he continued to gaze at the formula.

In the next moment from within the formula an [arm] extended.

An arm sticking out of the ground——it was a little horrific.

“Now then, grasp that arm and the one over there wilt decide whether or not thee art worthy to receive their power.” (Touka)

“S, sure.” (Sare)

A strange feeling fluttered in Sare’s chest as he approached the arm that extended from the technique formula on the ground. He crouched before it and gripped its hand.

He couldn’t feel any life from it, the flesh felt more like something made from ceramic.

After grasping the hand for a few moments, Sare felt the hand from over there sending power to where their hands met, and then he was release from its grip.

The hand extending from the ground then extended a finger and bent over to write something on the ground near Sare.

Sare read the words aloud as they were written.

“Let’s see... [Within you, the power of tsukkomi, resides. There is no need, for me to lend you, my power, figure it out, yourself] ——hey, do your damn job!!”
(Sare)

Sare raised his hand high above him and slapped the arm coming out of the

formula.

Afterward the arm pounded its palm on the ground excitedly and gave a thumbs up.

“[There you go. It’s that kind of feeling, make sure not to forget it.]” It wrote before receding back into the earth.

“Uwah....how annoying! Somehow that guy really pissed me off!! That shitty arm!!” (Sare)

“That is basically how you do it.” (Touka)

“I get it, but I don’t get it. In any case I understand that those of the Divine race are my enemies!” (Sare)

‘I know how you feel,’ the rest of the group responded in unison.



“Well, well, well, we have certainly strayed from our main discussion. Let us return to the problem at hand,” Alice began, “if anyone has an idea as to where we should head, or knows of a landmark we should aim for, please speak up.”

“I already told you, we should just begin work on building my country!!” (Premi)

“Rejected. But if no one else has a suggestion that plan will be selected by default....if you are absolutely against it, please decide something out of a desperate attempt to keep Premi’s kingdom from being our goal.” (Alice)

At those words, members of the group broke out in discussion:

‘Wait, if it’s Premi’s kingdom, wouldn’t that mean she’d be our queen? Then

we'd all just be her subjects?'

'If that's the case we need to do something to prevent it from happening....we'd be better off becoming vagabonds. Ahh...really now....'

"You're all a bunch of cretins, yet you dare to speak so cheekily!! Just shut up and kneel before me!! You should happily plant your face into the ground!! If you do I'll step on you!! When you are lucky enough to be tread on you should show me a face in ecstasy and say [It feels so good!]!!"

As debates travelled through the group Premiere's voice could occasionally be heard accompanied by shrieks from her unfortunate victims. They were a lively bunch.

Sare was currently standing in the middle of this group and tilted his head as he listened to the various conversations going around him. Although he had recently joined them, he wasn't comfortable yet with joining in on the discussions.

Rather, it might be helpful to absorb the various gossip he heard and formulate a consensus on his own.

'Makoto's fox ears, I really want to touch them.'

'Don't Premi's white wings look kind of soft?'

'That new guy, the Majin, his tail might also be worth considering?'

There were other similar discussions that were absolutely unnecessary in solving the problem at hand. Sare pretended he didn't hear anything.

The mention of his tail, which he took great pride in, was worrisome so he decided to hide it in his clothes from now on.

It might be in danger.

“Is anything the matter?” (Alice)

“Nah, nothing worth mentioning.” (Sare)

There seemed to be a question mark above Alice’s head as she asked curiously, but Sare forced a smile and continued to listen to the discussions that surrounded them.



In conclusion, despite the multitude of discussions, they still couldn’t decide on a specific plan.

There were too many varying opinions.

The biggest reason they couldn’t decide was because, due to the presence of so many [different races], their differences in beliefs and backgrounds made it difficult to find common ground.

The biggest divide was between those who were [for fighting] and those who were [against fighting].

Those who were for fighting had one main reason.

They felt they were just in pursuing a [war for revenge].

Although they knew they couldn’t stand against Atem’s armies, they felt the group could win against the forces that pursued them.

There were a large number of group members who felt this way.

These members were determined to immediately begin to formulate their strategy and plan their defence.

Compared to the pro-fighting members those who were against fighting had a multitude of reasons for their opinion.

They believed that the group could never stand against Atem’s military forces.

There was a lot of uncertainty as to how they would fight, and whether their

mismatched forces would be effective in battle.

There were also those who, rather than feeling unable to fight, came from a culture that did not see a need for battle.

The many members whose races were unsuitable for battle also added that ‘Unlike you were are unable to effectively fight.’

And lastly, one depressing reason was— —

“I don’t care anymore. — —I’m tired of this.”

From a corner of the group a single voice spoke out,

“Everyone is already dead. No matter if we find a way to live from here on out, it’s futile.”

Sare empathized with these words.

He couldn’t deny such a reason.

If he had heard them a few days ago, he would have said the same thing.

He lost so much, and regretted even more.

At these words everyone dropped their gaze to the ground.

But Sare was no longer easily influenced by such words.

Though he did understand them.

— —*I decided to fight back against the flow of this world.*

As if reflecting the strength of his will, his red eyes seemed to shine.

“What do you think, Sare-san?Rather, what would you like to do?” (Alice)

Alice seemed to be trembling.

Even though her candid voice, her awfully respectable way of speaking, and the faded light in her eyes hadn't changed.

“I see. ——Well, aren't they both fine?”

Sare continued, “Well, it's fine to want to fight for revenge, and for those who think we wouldn't stand a chance it's perfectly reasonable to not want to fight. There are also times when simply fighting won't satisfy those wishing for revenge. Although it sounds convenient, there are also those who are managing to survive by hoping to go to Atem Kingdom in order to fulfill their desire for revenge.” (Sare)

There was also a grudge. Atem Kingdom had initiated the [Other races subjugation plan] which was offensive in itself.

“From what you told me, the Atem Kingdom thinks the Other races are an eyesore so they started to subjugate them. If that's the case, just managing to run away is a sort of revenge. Ah, but like I said before, this may just be a convenient truth.” (Sare)

In other words,

“——In the end, I think everyone should be free to do what they need to. After all——aren't you all connected by fragile bonds? Because you were in similar circumstances, because you had all lost people, you ended up together, but even so, just because you've been together for around a month it doesn't mean you

are able to truly understand one another.” (Sare)

Though being able to understand one another would be a good thing.

“You’re naive to think that such a loosely connected group could win against the Atem Kingdom’s unified forces which believe in the creed of the [supreme rule of the Pure race].

This is my honest opinion.

But, even so,

“If you still feel that you have to fight, that you need to desperately struggle, then I think it’s important to remember the need to struggle under the flag of a [just cause].”

Although this is just the ramblings of a guy who has just joined up, Sare wanted to add.

“So I’ll answer the question I was asked earlier. ——What do I want to do? No, what do I wish to do? My answer would be——”

Sare took a deep breath before continuing, at some point their eyes had focused on him.

Everyone was focusing on his gestures, they were straining their ears to hear his words.

“Rather than saying that one month isn’t very long to know one another, aren’t the days you spent struggling forwards together kind of amazing? Also,

besides that——you had [Alice] with you. I heard that you all made it this far by thinking [We should at least protect Alice]. If that's the case——”

I'll just say it,

“Isn't that a good enough reason?”

The words were spoken candidly.

Sare continued,

“Protecting her is a just cause, so couldn't you continue on this way?”

——Ahh, even I realize that I'm blurting out a bunch of nonsense in the guise of a plan.

So Sare thought, but he continued on anyways.

“You could call it sophistry, a stance, a whim, a show of self-righteousness, or even honor. You don't need to follow any sort of motive. ——Just keep moving forward. If we are ever forced to reveal this group's motive, we can confess that we are kept together by a simple goal that the varying members all believe in.”

Or you could say its a group that is kept together because they don't have a clear goal. At least not at this point.

“It's not as if our differences mean that we can never get along. Even if you met another member of your race, there is no guarantee that they will think the same way you do.”

Thoughts and feelings are different for everyone.

“That’s why it’s fine to just [protect her]. Can’t we just go forward raising the flag of such a just cause? In cases where those who are against fighting are faced with enemies, they can run away while saying it was to protect Alice, similarly those who want to fight can face their enemies and take them on in order to protect her. ——Oh? I feel like I’ve managed to finally say something important.”

But it’s almost like I’m saying our stance should be to strategically go to war.

What a stupid idea.

But,

I’m speaking honestly.

These unusual, fragile bonds that have formed——I don’t want to lose them.

As Alice said, they are a sort of substitution, bonds that have helped to stop up the hole in my heart.

Using them as a substitution is fine. At this point, I want to keep them.

——I’m sounding pretty emotional about this.

Even so,

“It may be simple but——I think it’s better if everyone struggles to live on.”

For this group to truly think as a [single body] then they need to have an official stance to bring them together.

After time passes, this stance will be tainted by their individual motives and that unity will change and the group could collapse.

But if time has passed, the group will not easily break up for such reasons.

“I have my own reasons for wanting to go against the Atem Kingdom and I’ve decided to do everything I can to follow this desire, even if I have to go it alone. But, after all, having comrades is reassuring—most of all because being alone is lonely.” (Sare)

“You are awfully emotional about all this Sare-san.” (Alice)

“Eh?” (Sare)

Sare jumped a bit in surprise at the words Alice whispered to him.

It was one thing if he thought it, but it was embarrassing if someone pointed it out.

“A fine speech, Sare.” (Touka)

“I had no idea that the Majins were in possession of the power of public speaking.” (Gillius)

“Such a cheeky cretin!! —But you make a good point, for your efforts I’ll elevate you from a cretin to a commoner!!” (Premi)

“How are they different?!” (Sare)

At some point everyone’s eyes had lit up at Sare’s words.

They had been lit up by everyone’s determination which meant,

—*Everyone decided to buy into my bullshit.*

But there’s one more thing I need to say,

“I’ve basically proposed that Alice should become like our pillar of support, but what do you want to do, Alice?” (Sare)

“[Like]? You practically made me your pillar. Are you going to pray to me?”
(Alice)

“...Oh, are you mad?” (Sare)

“Not at all, I do not feel at all angry. I give you permission to pray to me, after all, during the journey up until now I had practically been an object of worship. This would just be a continuation of what has happened up until now. If that is what everyone needs to do to move forwards, then by all means, pray to me to your heart’s content.” (Alice)

Her consent was a little difficult to take in.

“But....I suppose it is not a bad idea after all. Even for those who do not wish to fight off death, refusing to die at this point may at least annoy Atem Kingdom. —If that is the case, as Sare-san said, being able to stay together following a simple goal may be the right idea. Having an official stance is a good start.”
(Alice)

“Well, even if ‘tis just for show, an official stance may reassure those who see us as a threat. Even if’t slightly, showing some defiance is good,” Touka said teasingly while nodding her head as she spoke.

“We have managed to slightly advance our discussion,” Alice began. “Now then, everyone, how shall you go about protecting me? Let us return to our earlier discussion as to our goal.”

In this way one discussion was brought to an end.

Since Sare’s idea was accepted, he was prepared to take responsibility for his decision.

TN: Some names of the races were changed, since I didn’t like my katakana approximations from last chapter. They are as follows:

Reg Nahdo ==> Regnard

Ehno Ayla ==> Iino Ehla (*I messed this one up because I couldn't read the tiny katakana...>.>;*)

I will be making a page for some of the terms and whatnot in the near future.

Chapter 10: Footsteps of Evil Intent

While sitting amongst the group still immersed in discussion, Sare began to pursue a different problem on his own.

The group had just discovered its own will, a group mentality, which had solidified the 'foundation' of the group itself.

The will to protect Alice had to be fostered so the group could grow from here and pursue their own place to belong.

That will was the group's 'heart' after all.

For the sake of such a group, the individual members had to decide for themselves if they will embrace this will of their own volition. If any member cannot honestly support this ideal then if they remain in the group it will only distort the group's 'heart.'

But,

—That doesn't mean I'll force those who can't, and won't, fight to stand on the frontlines.

In the end, it's a question of their individual will and position on the matter.

But there's no way I can ask them to truly embrace these ideals at this point.

They could probably continue as before for another month, after all, they've existed by following the mantra of "protect Alice" for a month already, but after that time has expired they would just fall apart. There would be no point.

For now, everyone seemed onboard with continuing to protect Alice. They could understand the importance of doing so.

The current problem was more of a concern as to whether or not personal emotions would cause problems later on.

If the ideal of protecting Alice is promoted effectively emotions, such as personal affection towards Alice and the like, won't be necessary.

But, if there's no affection involved, the official stance of protecting Alice

seems unnatural.

In any case, no matter how it's presented, a group that protects Alice without affection or any sort of empathy shouldn't, and likely couldn't, exist.

— — But, if that's the case, then such an emotionally-oriented ideal would definitely leave us vulnerable. And this vulnerability will eventually cost us.

Sare said to himself,

“— — It's too idealistic, huh?”

Which were his honest thoughts.

After saying it aloud he felt he better understood the problem, Sare frowned and scratched the back of his head.

Yes, quite idealistic.

Alfred and the others had a comparatively large amount of battle experience. That's why, when they trained me they were merciless and discarded their own emotions in order to teach me fully. Because of this I was given any number of wounds because they didn't get distracted by their personal feelings and in this way they imparted to me the basics of real battle.

— — Well, Alfred and the others were fundamentally kind.

Even so, only when they were training me did they put aside that kindness.

They never told me as much, but that's what I deduced upon reflection.

Emotional attachments and fondness are fostered when you have survived and are able to embrace such emotions and bear their fetters.

If they weren't in such a stable situation, they would have never taken upon themselves to pick me up, raise me, and protect me.

But, if this group were to draw out their true strength, such fondness may instead become an obstruction.

On the other hand, these emotions may instead be the key to draw out their truth strengths, but such a phenomenon would not be seen for quite some time, at time when this group is truly united.

— — For now it's impossible.

That's why,

“—Power is necessary.”

The power to prevent any crises or abuse that would disrupt the group before it had time to settle itself.

“Whatever is the matter?” Alice suddenly spoke from beside him, at some point she had come closer, but as usual she spoke expressionlessly.

“Oh, it's nothing really.” (Sare)

“Nothing you say...even though you said ‘Power is necessary’ with such a dignified expression?” (Alice)

—Can you really not see? —Aren't you supposed to be blind?

“Ah, you see I discerned from your tone of voice that you would appear that way. —Although it was just a guess, I suppose I was correct, was I not?” (Alice)

Although her reply seemed positive, she seemed to deliberately step back a bit.

Is she trying to act surprised? No matter how I see it she deliberately stepped back. If you can't make it look more natural it'll be troublesome in the future.

“Due to my lack of vision, my sense of hearing is unbelievably sharp. Although it can be seen as rude, I am able to gather quite a bit from the sounds around me. Please be careful.” (Alice)

“Yeah, I'll be careful.” (Sare)

—Of your hearing and your teasing!

“In any case, we should not discuss this topic here.”

Alice's gestures, from the start, when she acted surprised, to now, as she brushed off her sleeves and sat down next to Sare, looked as if they were all carefully scripted.

“By that I am acknowledging that I have grasped Sare's current thoughts. But, this is not something you should have to figure out on your own. —More than likely, many others have had thoughts similar to Sare-san's own. To name a few, Gillius-san and Touka-san. And also, maybe—Premiere-san.” (Alice)

Although I can confidently say the first part of that statement is likely, if you

mention Premiere— —I wonder.

A woman who calls people she just met [cretins] just moments after meeting them.

Terribly self-centered.

So arrogant, as if we shouldn't be allowed to breath the same air.

"After travelling together for a month, I believe I have a handle on her personality enough to understand her point of view." (Alice)

"— —The results of your findings are?" (Sare)

"She follows the policy of 'everyone except myself are all cretins.'" (Alice)

— —I think the whole group has come to the same conclusion.

"But it is not just that— —"

Sare was smiling wryly to himself as Alice continued her thought.

"She believes these cretins are frail, stupid beings and thinks that 'Cretins are beings I must protect.'" (Alice)

— —That's....

How arrogant, how disadvantageous— —what a noble thought.

If that person has such noble thoughts then I could truly believe she'd understand this group's problem.

— —Unfortunately, at her base, Premiere is just an idiot.

"Well, I do wonder though. She does belong to the idiot class after all." (Alice)

"Ah, just now I was thinking the same thing." (Sare)

"Is that so. — —At her base, she is a person with many varying thoughts, who, when the mood takes her, can choose to understand or misunderstand any idea. Somewhat air-headed, she is a one-of-a-kind stupid angel. On that point we agree." (Alice)

"Haha, that's for sure," Sare replied cheerfully.

Alice suddenly redirected the conversation,

“Now then, in my opinion we have stayed here for an awfully long time. Although I am concerned as we are still being pursued by the Atem Kingdom...to push them into motion before we have made a decision as to our goals and have yet to be ready to move forwards in unison, would only be inviting danger from our enemies swooping in to attack. —I suppose it cannot be helped,” Alice paused to sigh before continuing,

“A bird that does not know what the ground looks like has no choice but to fly with all its strength for the whole of its life. Once it has exhausted all its strength it will quickly fall. We know what the ground looks like because we have already become exhausted and even if we flap our wings we can no longer fly, we are at the point where we wish to simply rest to regain our strength.” (Alice)

“How poetic.” (Sare)

Hearing her words, Sare became convinced of something.

Something concerning Alice.

From the very first meeting until now Sare had been of the opinion that she never showed emotion. Because she was expressionless.

But, that impression was likely incorrect.

—*—She [sees] this group more than anyone else.*

If you expose your inner thoughts, people can [somehow or other] come to understand you.

A person who is truly without emotion, when they encounter an ordinary person who expresses their inner thoughts, will be unable to understand them.

That’s why, she is not emotionless, because she can understand them, she can [see] their inner thoughts.

But if that’s the case, why is it—

—*—Why is it Alice never shows emotion on her face?*

Sare would soon discover the answer to this question.

The migrating birds who had grown close were still in disarray as the [great country] descended upon them.



“Ah....” Alice spoke quietly as she quickly stood up.

“What’s wrong?” Sare asked, but Alice closed her eyes and shivered.

As if she sought to focus the whole of her senses, she ceased all motion.

Everyone immediately noticed Alice’s behavior and, in order to not disturb her focus, stopped speaking and also drew very still.

“It is....Uura Mitos——” (Alice)

“Is that....for sooth?” Gillius stood up, and urged Alice to continue.

“——So it appears, I have no doubt. Innumerable footsteps, and the words [Atem Kingdom] can be heard in their conversations, though it is very faint so maybe——Ah! Just now, I heard it for sure....”

[Victory for the Pure race, for the glory of Atem], Alice repeated the phrases she was hearing.

Everyone felt a sickly throbbing in their chests return that they had wanted to forget.



“As I thought...we stayed here too long. ——I was foolish,” Alice spoke as she dropped her gaze to the ground.

“Everyone trusts Alice’s judgement. Alice hasn’t been foolish. Also——don’t be so quick to call your decision foolish just yet.” (Sare)

Like the others, Sare also recalled the same uncomfortable feeling in his chest.

But, more than the discomfort, his body was ruled by a new [determination].

——*It’d be bad to declare Alice’s judgement foolish at this point.*

The group had only just decided to come together for Alice’s sake, she was central to the group, an incident at this point would unravel their fragile bonds.

No matter what happens, until they were truly united——

Her words, and Alice herself, must be protected.

If not, it would all come tumbling down.

Not only that,

— — *No one else must die.*

If even a single person dies, the [reality] of their situation would immediately crush any [ideals] they held in their hearts.

That's why,

— — *I have to protect everything and everyone.*

Even if this determination was born of [self-righteousness]...

"Alice, I have to ask, can we run away?"

"It is impossible Touka-san. They are marching even faster than I thought possible."

"...*Fumu*, then this fight is unavoidable."

In response to Touka's words, Gillius offered his own idea,

"How do the skies fare? We has't many winged races in this group, and if I were to completely assume mine dragon form I could carry any number of people to safety."

"Ara? Idiot dragon? Can you really fly like that? Pilin' on tons of cretins, fluttering around in the air, is that your aim? Really? — — Like, for reals!?"
(Premi)

"Don't lose sight of the issue at hand, Premi." (Gillius)

"What? Calling me a woman who has lost sight of herself, wouldn't that make me unsightly? A beautiful, noble woman like myself? Who stands above you lowly cretins as a member of the great Heaven race? That I could lose sight of myself, staggering about — — there's no way! No matter what happens in this life, I will never be on the same level as you cretins! If you let those cretins in the sky that way, they'll want to become more noble and high class and end up trying to imitate me! Then one day they'll try to fly on their own — — and die!"
(Premi)

"W-what kind of scenario is that?" Gillius wondered as a question mark seemed to float above his head, but he continued to listen to Premiere's words.

“That’s right, they’ll die. I’m noble so I’ll be fine you know? I’m high class, so even if I lose sight of myself, I’ll be fine you know?! I’ve been blessed with wisdom since birth!! I’ll be fine!! —But cretins will die. Why’s that? Because they’re idiots!! They’ll try to fly, maybe jump from that tree over there and fall, then they’re dead!! —Stupid, right?!” (Premi)

[Does anyone have a hammer? Maybe if we hit her on the head it might fix her!] Or so said someone from within the group.

But, Premiere didn’t stop there,

“But that’s no good. I won’t allow them to die. Because! Dead cretins aren’t able to serve me!! *Fufufu....!*”

—*In any case, Premiere has managed to convey the fact that she wouldn’t allow anyone to die, or something.*

Sare thought to himself with a furrowed brow and a wry smile.

She communicated it, with her own bizarre, arrogant methods.

But, well, being who she is, that was probably the only way she knew how.

“Well, let’s do our best so no one dies.” (Sare)

“Everyone should have had enough of losing people they care about. If that’s the case— —from this point on let’s focus on obtaining things instead. The people we’ve lost can’t come back, but that doesn’t mean we can’t obtain new things. So, at the very least, these connections we have obtained— —” (Sare)

I’ll protect them.

After speaking these words, Sare turned his gaze towards the direction of the approaching soldiers.

Chapter 11: The Bearer of Truth [1/2]

“Which direction are they approaching from?” Sare asked Alice.

“They are approaching from the west. They seem to have come directly from Atem towards the Irudoe domain. I feel that their approach is deliberate.”

— *Perhaps they’re coming to clean up after their subjugation of the Majins.*

Or maybe to hunt down any survivors, Sare thought after listening to Alice’s words.

“Then we have no choice but to escape to the east.” (Sare)

“Are we going to run?” (Alice)

“If their numbers equal our own it would be one thing, but if they outnumber us we would likely be annihilated.” (Sare)

Not only that, many of our members are of the non-violence faction.

If we pushed for a fight here, it would be difficult to deal with them in the future.

Also, it was too early. Those who were against conflict had yet to find solidarity within the group, and I would like to respect their wishes and avoid fighting if we can.

More than anything, I want to be able to count on their support in the future so that they will be of assistance when I need them the most.

So running away should be the choice that I consider first and foremost in every situation.

“— —I see. — —There are roughly four times our numbers, around 200 soldiers.” (Alice)

“Then, those who can fight will buy time, and if possible, mount a counterattack. The others will seek refuge by going east. Ah, but if they’ve already set up an ambush that way it’ll be troublesome.” (Sare)

“I do not sense anything in that direction, I do not think there is an ambush,

still...it is a possibility.” (Alice)

No matter what they should move the non-violence faction of the group away from the front lines.

Both Alice and Sare were in agreement on that point.

Even if the situation were more easily handled by having those in the non-violence faction participate, it might become habit to rely upon them the next time the group faced danger, which would just seem like harassment to people who wanted to avoid conflict.

Even though their group was still not really unified and could use their help, it was better to avoid forcing them to fight in the long run.

— — *How difficult....even though we're in a tight spot we can't push them at this point.*

“In any case, what shall we do about the group that will be retreating? I won't ignore the likelihood of an ambush, so I'd like to have some of those willing to fight lead those who are retreating.” (Sare)

It would reduce the strength of their front line, but it would definitely be ensure the safety of the retreating group.

The problem was whether one of those itching for a fight would be interested in leading the retreat or not. With their most loathed enemy standing before them, they would likely desire to march forwards.

As Sare was considering this problem, a voice interrupted his thoughts,

“Then, I will lead the retreat,” or so said a silver-haired, silver-eyed woman who seemingly popped out in front of Sare and the rest.

A woman with a silver tail, which appeared to be quite soft.

She had a beautiful, yet also handsome, face, a so-called ‘peerless beauty.’ Her appearance was so striking that you might get the impression that she would be cold-hearted.

But, contrary to that impression, her tail was a truly honest and simple-minded existence.

Despite her stoic face, it was wagging quite happily.

“I am one of the Wolf Gala, the Werewolf race. My nose is excellent. If I’m leading the retreat then there’s no way we’ll run into an ambush.”

Alice turned her gaze towards the girl’s tail, which was still waving back and forth exuberantly, as if she could actually see it and said,

“...A dog?”

“W, wolf!!”

“Ah, my apologies, how rude of me. Still, it seems to be quite a cute tail.”

“C, cu, cute...that’s...”

—— *Why is she getting so embarrassed? It seems she does not realize the other party is messing with her, how interesting, but I will leave her alone for now at least.*

Or so thought Alice, who had called her cute based on her tone of voice.

“Hmm, I believe your name was....” (Alice)

“——[Shioni]. [Shioni Simonshial].”

“Ah yes. Well Shioni-san, can I leave the leadership of the retreat to you?”
(Alice)

“Yes, please leave it to me.” (Shioni)

As Shioni agreed with an enthusiastic nod, one of those in the [fighting group] stood apart and addressed the rest.

“As a Wolf Gala, she shall be sufficient if’t cometh to a fight. ——If that is the case, we shalt stand firm on the front lines, shall we not?” Touka said as a smile spread across her face.

“Everyone’s faces seem strange, considering how close we are to battle. For your smiles to be revived in such a situation, it is a bit excessive, is it not?” (Alice)
“Oh? But art we not seeking to showeth off our official stance by directly opposing Atem Kingdom? ——*Hahaha*, how could we win if’t we wast not wearing a smile? In a battle such as this, the ones who enjoy themselves the most wilt claim victory. A smile wilt beat back any tragedy. If ‘tis true, even the

king of Atem wilt beest in for a surprise, and even if't untrue, is't not acceptable for us to hast this little bit of enjoyment?" (Touka)

"Is that what this is?" (Alice)

"Umu, 'tis so." (Touka)

Touka cackled to herself, before she again addressed Alice,

"Now then, Alice, what shall milady do in this situation? —Well, you could go with the retreating group, but doest not the [duty of protection] belong to the fighting faction—?"

"I am not fast on my feet, so I would only slow them down. To sum it up concisely—I belong on the side of [those who can protect]. From now on, my defense will be the first issue we face when we encounter opposition."

"Alice, thou art once again speaking quite rebelliously," Touka said with a smile.

"So, what is the plan?" Gillius wondered aloud from nearby.

"—We shall face Atem's attack, if you are all able to protect me through this battle, it will improve our [self-confidence] as a group. You may as well use this opportunity to fortify your determination, as well as enjoy yourselves. In my personal case, I believe that considering my distant future is the best way to mentally prepare myself for such situations." (Alice)

"Fuumu, I see, I see." (Gillius)

"For the members fighting on the front line, I may be a bother... —In any case, those in the retreating group will find shelter somewhere, and after we have won and are safe again we shall reunite with them, if we can manage this it shall be the first piece of [proof] we will have attained together." (Alice)

"It's a pretty exciting bet, huh?" Sare added with a grin.

"If you are unable to protect me here, I do not see a future for this group."
(Alice)

And they will have no choice but to constantly move forward, with no end in sight.

Therefore, if they can maintain its composure and succeed here, it will bring

good fortune to the group as a whole.

“Well, that’s how it is. —Still, there are more of you here than I would have thought,” Sare said while looking over the fighting group.

“A surprising number of those who are suited for this sort of thing. On this occasion, I wonder if referring to you all as [nothing but fools] would be acceptable so long as I used a sarcastic tone?” (Alice)

“I do not believe you are incorrect, but saying it aloud is a bit too straightforward.” (Gillius)

Then ten-odd members who were staying behind all wore gruesome smiles as they stepped forward to prepare.

While they were bustling about, the retreating group seemed to have gotten everything ready. Shioni gave a quick glance towards Alice before saying,

“We’re ready to head out, Alice.”

Alice turned her head and then her body towards the voice, and gave Shioni a deep, respectful bow before answering:

“I entrust the rest to you, Shioni-san.”

“Leave it to me!” Shioni replied enthusiastically with a nod.

“Let’s head out!” She shouted towards her group.



A few minutes after the retreating group had run off, Sare turned his gaze west, and could make out the coiling cloud of grit that had billowed up from the army’s marching.

The enemy had appeared.

The pursuing forces from Atem.

“—By the way, how are we going to regroup after we chase these guys off?” (Sare)

“I will take to the skies with this group and we will search for them from above. I can handle this number of riders, so fret not.” (Gillius)

“Roger, roger. Now then—let’s finish this job first, shall we?” (Sare)

At Sare’s words, the frontline group nodded in unison.



And then, two great forces had their first encounter.



A rumbling sound slowly approached Sare and the others.

[They] continued forwards until they were a few dozen meters before them. Their approach gave Sare and the others feelings of unease, but even so, at the same time, it roused their determination.

As if they were standing firm before a group of fearsome beasts.

They probably expect us to run about in a panic, like ants after their line has been disturbed.

The cloud of grit and sand was blown by the wind, and tickled Sare’s nose.

Nevertheless, there was no way they would be broken here.

They had an [official stance] that would support them.

Their determination was not like a heavy burden, but rather a voice of inspiration which echoed in their hearts.

—Protect Alice.

With these words in their hearts—

They raised their gazes and stared [them] down.



Everyone in their group was wearing armor that shone brilliantly, and they glowered at Sare and the others from the crevice of their dull-colored full-plate helmets.

The whole of the army gave off an air of hostility.

Besides their armor, they all possessed identical, extravagant swords. These swords were decorated with an elaborate design, above which the word [Atem] was elegantly embossed.

It was most likely the crest of Atem Kingdom.

The [soldiers] were lined up systematically in a rectangular shape. From the middle of this defensive formation a man marched forth.

He was completely different from the other soldiers. He was wearing ornamental light armor, his short, reddish hair blew about in the breeze, and the corner of his mouth was turned up.

As he approached, he turned his willful, reddish brown eyes towards their front line, which seemed to bore into Sare, who stood at the vanguard.

“—Eh? What’s up will all these other races gathering here? I mean, isn’t that a Majin over there? Whoa, there’s a whole bunch of different ones mixed in, yeah? What the hell, aren’t we in Irudoe?Yikes, I’m so confused. Can anyone explain what’s going on—?”

The red-haired man turned his gaze towards the ranks of soldiers standing behind him, and once again, from within their ranks came another person who seemed out of place.

“I don’t really get it either, hmmm—let’s just kill ‘em?”

She spoke in a light-hearted tone.

A woman.

She was also dressed in ornamental light armor. She was older.

Her hair was short and purplish black, and she had sharp blue eyes.

“To be honest I don’t really care, do whatever you want. But don’t forget, if you do something that goes against orders you’ll be scolded by the shitty Glasses¹. That would be a pain in the ass. Right?—”

“That’s why, after I saw this small group of other races I thought, [Weird, can’t we just go home without doing anything—?], but if we went home without acting we’d get even more scolding from shitty Glasses.”

“Oh, that makes sense. Then, hurry up and dispatch them—”

After the woman spoke the red-haired man once again turned his gaze towards their group and slowly evaluated them one by one.

As he turned his eyes on them they could feel that he was sizing them up, and there was a vicious bite to his gaze. Sare and the others began to prepare themselves mentally, but— —

“— —Eh?Ah?!Hey, hey, hey, hey! Wait a sec! [Shayna], over there, isn't that Her Royal Highness?”

“— —What? What are you talking about, you simpleton? There's no way Her Royal Highness is here. Have your muscles finally reached all the way up to your eyes?Ah, how sad. Yes, it's truly a tragedy.” (Shayna)

“Shut up a minute and look!”

“[Ekkehardt], you're so noisy....very well, I'll take a look. — —So, which one is it?” (Shayna)

“— —Over there,” Ekkehardt, the red-haired man, said while pointing.

Who?

Sare and the others followed the direction of Ekkehardt's finger, as did Shayna, who was still standing amongst the ranks of Atem's soldiers.

The person Ekkehardt was pointing at was— —

The one at the pit of their group, who stood as a figurehead to support them — —the girl named [Alice Art].



The surprised shout when the truth was realized was loud enough to shake the trees of Irudoe.



“— —EH?!”

Shayna was the one who shouted.

She rubbed her eyes against her sleeves and strained her eyes as she focused on Alice.

“Ara? Are my eyes also becoming muscle....? How strange, even though I thought I wasn't a muscle-creature.” (Shayna)

“Face reality. I also can’t believe it, but that’s how it is,” Ekkehardt urged.

“So...it is. So it is. There’s no other explanation. But, if she’s the real thing, aren’t we being super rude? Before we give that shitty Glasses another reason to scold us——” (Shayna)

“Yes, before we give another reason——” (Ekkehardt)

In the next moment the two had dropped to one knee——and kneeled before them.

Their posture influence the two-hundred soldiers who stood behind them, and the soldiers also dropped into a kneeling position.

“The Emperor has been concerned. You are her Royal Highness, [Princess Alice Art Atem], are you not?”

Ekkehardt and Shayna said, while they kept their heads down.

Sare and the others couldn’t understand what was going on. Nor what they were saying.

These people were speaking about something they didn’t understand, their discussion felt alien to their ears.



——*I don’t understand what’s going on.*

Sare and the others were in shock.

Before them the whole of Atem’s army were kneeling with their heads down.

The target of their hostilities had suddenly become like that.

——*What are they talking about?*

Sare considered their words over and over in his head.

——[Alice Art Atem]

Her name is Alice Art.

She told me her name herself.

She had introduced herself to the others the same way.

First name Alice, last name Art.

But they had just heard another version: Alice Art [Atem].

— — *That's impossible.*

If that's her name, it's as if she's....

Part of [Atem's royal family].

Sare shook his head and tried to dislodge that idea from his thoughts.

— — *No, there's no way.*

He denied it.

This girl who was leading a group of Other races— —there was no way she could be a member of the royal family, a royal family that hoped to enact the supreme rule of the Pure race over all others.

The two positions were too polarized for her to belong to both.

— — *They're just misunderstanding. This is just a case of mistaken identity.*

Their eyes must be just for show.

If that's the case, while their heads are lowered...

Have the frontlines— —

Despite these thoughts, Sare didn't move.

Perhaps, unconsciously, he was waiting for Alice to say something.

The others were likely waiting for her to speak as well.

The battlefield was stuck in limbo.

Time seemed to come to a halt, the whole situation felt unnatural, like they had been trapped in a frozen moment in time.

And then— —



"I see. Yes, there was a time when I was called by that name."



Sare felt as if he could hear something breaking inside his head.

1. Glasses is capitalized because they are referring to a person here, though I don't know who just yet~
-

Chapter 12: The Bearer of Truth [2/2]

Alice had confirmed the truth of Ekkehardt and Shayna's words.

She had acknowledged their words, and even nodded in confirmation, that she was a member of Atem's royal family.

"We have been concerned, your highness. May we ask, how have you come to this place? —It is dangerous here. There are many Other races about. Allow us to return you to the royal capital. We, Atem's [Second King's Blade] shall guard and guide you," Ekkehardt said while keeping his face turned towards the ground.

But Alice shook her head.

"No, I may have once held the name of Atem's royal family, but now it is different. I am [Alice Art]. I am just a....let's see— —a [failure of an Other race]." (Alice)

"What are you saying? You are a child of our king. To call yourself one of the Other races— —it is impossible. You are one of the [Pure] race. It would not be an exaggeration to call you a pure-blooded [Uura Mythos]." (Ekkehardt)

"Incorrect. — — — — Since you brought it up, even though you call yourselves the [King's Blades], you would not know of the truth of the royal family." (Alice)

"Forgive me for asking, but what is this truth? — —" (Ekkehardt)

Both those of the Other and Pure races in attendance waited for Alice's reply.

"Do you want to know?" (Alice)

"Yes, if your highness wishes to speak of it." (Ekkehardt)

"I understand. Then — — I will tell you. Let me see, I will try to make it as brief as possible, so those of you who wish to listen please pay attention." (Alice)

Alice looked at Sare and the others and the soldiers who faced them with her usual expressionlessness.



“I would first like to mention that the Atem royal family is an existence which is [half Other race]. I believe it has been this way since around 500 years ago.”
(Alice)

“That’s—” Shayna immediately interjected, intending to negate Alice’s statement, but—

“Please listen properly and save your questions until the end,” Alice interrupted. She waited until everyone had lapsed back into silence before she continued,

“Since ancient times, Atem Kingdom has always been secretly maneuvering for the sake of enacting a grandiose [project]. Atem has always shared a deep connection with a certain race, and that project would help them finally subjugate them. The name of this project was—”

Alice turned her gaze towards Sare before continuing:



“The [Majin Project].”



“It is a rather straightforward title. I suppose Atem’s royal family back then lacked the naming sense to do any better, but let us move on.”

“The Majin....Project?” The words escaped Sare’s lips.

“To put it simply, it was a project to create a Majin for the sake of destroying the Majins. Please understand that to explain it in detail would take a very long time, so for now I would like to return to the subject at hand—”

Alice continued, “Around the halfway point in the project, at a certain stage, [that existence], something that was not a Majin, was created.”

Sare suddenly remembered something written in Alfred’s note.



[As a separate project from creating a Majin, the Atem Kingdom would raise warriors of the Pure race for the express purpose of destroying those of the Majin race.]



Alfred was talking about the warriors that Atem had used to force that soul into the bodies of successive Majin emperors.

An existence that was of the Pure race, yet able to stand against Majins.

“— —That existence was us, the [Atem royal family].” (Alice)

At her words the ideas and memories swirling in Sare’s head suddenly came together as one, like a woven thread.

“Back then, in order to give the Atem royal family the ability to stand against the Majin emperor, and in order to bequeath their descendents the power to subjugate the Majins in the future, this project was begun and has continued for many generations. The Pure race members of the royal family undertook the duty of concealing this inhuman project. But, no matter how many of them chose to specialize in fighting them, their enemies were still the great Ehno Ayla. Their line was known as the strongest seed amongst the other races. Against them, no matter what those of the Pure race did, their wishes would never be granted. Even when they occasionally borrowed the power of the Dios and became Oracles, even then their strength could not match the Majins,” Alice took a deep breath before continuing,

“Since that time 500 years ago, Atem’s royal family has continued to become closer and closer to the other races,

“— —Basically, in order to subjugate the Majins, they found a way to turn someone of the Pure race into a Majin. It sounds like a joke. The original goal of the project was to create a strong Majin who would fight for Atem’s sake, but somewhere in the middle they decided they wanted to give birth to a pale imitation, a so-called [Pure Majin]. Oh dear, as expected, after saying all this, it really sounds like some foolish story— —really....”

Somewhat uncharacteristically, Alice let out a derisive laugh before continuing.

“To become closer to the Majin, the Atem royal family began experiments. They were gruesome. Implanting one with a Majin [eye]. The eye that houses the great power of which the Majin are so proud— —the eye of destruction, [Gram Istoor]. But at the start, they could not bear the power of the eye of

destruction, after using the eye at full strength just once, those of the royal family who were chosen to receive the eyes would die. Even though it seemed impossible, after the royal family invested a large amount of time and lives, they were finally able to get their hands on a body capable of bearing the burden of invoking the eye countless times.”

Alice paused before continuing, “To answer the question I was asked at the start, the result of these efforts was——[Alice Art Atem],” she spoke with a voice seemingly emptied of all emotion.

“——But, just as I was to take upon the burden of the Atem royal family’s destiny and had taken my first steps out into the world, the king called upon me.”



“[Without using the power of the Majins, I have caused the downfall of the Majin race. You have become an unneeded existence], or so my father told me in a frenzied madness.”



“He repeated those words with cruelty, like a demon. It felt as if my world had crumbled to dust. In shock, and without thinking, I let my [eye of destruction] run wild until I became blind,” as Alice said this she absentmindedly touched the area around her eyes.

“Ah, by the way, the reason that the royal family’s hair is usually somewhere between gray and black, and why their eyes seem light red is from the influence of the Pure Majins. That is because those of the Majin race have jet black hair and eyes the color of fresh blood. ——Because the Atem royal family are all just [imitations], the colors are a bit faded.”

Alice then turned to face Sare, and gave him a sad——smile.

“How is it? ——Can you see the symbol of the [Gram Istoora] in the center of my pupil?”

Being asked so suddenly, Sare absentmindedly looked into her eyes.

Although the color was faint, the pupil was red.

And within its center he could see the six-pointed star of the [eye of destruction].

“——Yeah....” (Sare)

“You see? I have received confirmation from a pure-blooded Majin. Even though I can no longer invoke it, even though I have lost my sight and can no longer focus my eyes on anything, it can still do that much.”

“How——”

Sare wanted to ask, ‘How did you come to the Other race’s side?’

Even though he wanted to say it, after that first word his throat closed up and nothing came out.

Still, with just his one word Alice knew what he wanted to say.

“I see. To put it simply——it is because I loath the Atem royal family,” Alice muttered.



“Why does the royal family go to so much trouble to wholeheartedly hate the other races? It is not as if I am disregarding their fears that the other races are ‘dangerous,’ even if that were the reason their actions are unreasonable. I cannot speak for what happened in the distant past, but is there any plausible reason for the blind exclusion of all other races in this day and age?” Alice seemed as if she wanted to say more, but held it in. She paused to recollect herself before continuing,

“Well, to the royal family such thoughts are heretical. Even I thought that way once. Whenever such thoughts were voiced out loud severe punishments were dealt. But in the end, after father said his piece to me, I no longer cared about being punished. I dare say, it was as if I had finally woken up. I let myself get lost in the bustle of the royal capital, I wandered mindlessly until I found myself in the outskirts of the region. That is when those guys came.”

By those guys, she likely means this group.

“The result is that I, who simply went with the flow, now stands before you. ——But, allow me to say one thing. I am indeed [related to your enemy]. That is

why, please feel free to resent me. Also, I offer up my own life——if you desire it,” Alice spoke these words with her usual expressionlessness.

“And those of you of the Second King’s Blade. To you I am a [half Other race]——your enemy.”

“.....”

“Indeed, you may have become soldiers in order to protect the royal family, but you also exist to protect the order and ideals of Atem. Besides, I have already thrown away the Atem name. Following Atem’s goal of the supreme rule of the Pure race it is your [duty] to kill me.”

“Whichever side wishes to aim for me, those with the [right] or those obligated by [duty]——it is first come first served.”

After her dramatic monologue, Alice suddenly threw open both arms.

It was a pose which daunted both parties.



The frontline group was stunned.

They couldn’t understand the situation.

It was chaos.

They had lost their center, their purpose had been destroyed.

Even Sare was unable to immediately move into action.

But, within their numbers was one person who was incapable of hesitating.

One who turned towards Alice with her fairy tale-like wings fluttering.

——It was Premiere.



On Atem’s side, Ekkehardt and Shayna, who lead the Second King’s Blade and were trained commanders, reacted quickly.

——*If you put it that way, that’s exactly right.*

The princess said it herself.

She was already no longer a member of the royal family, half of her was an Other race.

And the Second King's Blade was fighting for Atem's ideals, and bore the [duty] to enforce them.

—*It was a simple matter.*

Their doubts towards the royal family should be put aside for now, instead they must focus on their duty as soldiers of Atem.

In other words—

Ekkehardt reached for the large sword held in a scabbard at his back.

With a similar motion, Shayna reached for the bow at her back and paired it with an arrow she pulled from her quiver—

Which she shot.



Premiere who flew towards Alice like a bolting horse, or the arrow shot by Shayna, which was faster?

No matter which arrived first—

—*I will die.*

Even though it was not my intention, I regret that, in the end, I have betrayed them.

Although, I am the one to blame for hiding the truth.

—*Indeed. Making excuses at this point serves no purpose.*

That is why, at the very least—

—*All of you must survive.*

These thoughts came to her mind as Alice closed her eyes.

.....

—*Goodbye.*

Don't worry, Chapter 13 should be out in a few days. (^)

Chapter 13: An Angel's Pride

Upon hearing the sound of rushing wings and the released arrow, Alice braced herself for the impact.

But despite her preparedness, her strength left her and she collapsed.

But, instead of falling to the ground, someone was suddenly holding her up.

—There was a lovely scent.

A clear and fresh scent, like a flower blooming proudly in the frigid cold of a tall mountain.

There was also a pleasant sensation of something lightly brushing her cheek.

Like the highest quality feathers—



“What the hell. —Even though I exist as the epitome of beauty and dignity, it’s still pretty difficult to save cretins from their certain death.”



A high-pitched voice.

A voice that belonged to—

“—Premiere-san?” (Alice)

“Yep, it’s me. The high class angel of absolute beauty. —Oh, I’m not the angel here to guide you to heaven you know. I’m an angel from the Heaven race, see? Fufu....!” (Premiere)

“.....That is true. There is no way a messenger from heaven would be so arrogant.” (Alice)

“Fufufu...! If you’re still talking like that then that means you’re safe.”
(Premiere)

Premiere continued in a voice that shook slightly,

“Don’t worry. I’m not going to let you die. You’re a cretin that I’m proud of, my

cretin #1, you know? No matter what you're supposed to work hard on my behalf, you know? That's it! You can just exist for my sake!"

— — *Right now, what sort of face is she making?*

Alice thought as she was supported by the angel she couldn't see.

She suddenly felt deep regret for her hasty actions that led to the loss of her vision.

Also, Alice noticed that the arm that was supporting her was shaking slightly.

She was held close within Premiere's arms, so Alice reached her arm out to touch Premiere's back.

She felt— —

A warm, smeared something.

— — *Impossible.*

"Premiere-san?"

"Wha~at?"

"— — Please move away from there."

"Why? — — Fufu, a mere cretin giving me orders? That's no good, I won't listen to you! I'm the one who gets to give orders!! Not the one who follows them!! Those who give orders must be the embodiment of nobility, and must be responsible for those they order you know? Not only that, a good woman must occasionally stand her ground. That's right, this is one of those times— — Fufufu...!"

Alice drew up her strength and when she tried to shake off Premiere's support— —

"Fufu....!"

Premiere started.

As if she bore the impact of something.

Once again Alice reached for her back— —

She could feel the three arrows which were buried there.

“....tch!” (Alice)

— — *No.*

Thinking this, Alice gathered her strength once again and tried to break free from Premiere.

But— —

“Oho? Even though you’re being embraced by this gorgeous, high class woman, you’re trying to escape? Ahaha, Alice, you’re awfully willful aren’t you?!”

After saying Alice’s name— —she put even more strength in her arms than before, and held Alice close.

— — *Ah....*

She noticed.

She’s definitely more willful than me, she won’t let go.

Because of her pride.

Premiere completely believes in her ridiculous creed, that cretins must be protected, and she is the only person she can trust to protect them.

This angel is a stubborn, and willful— —

— — *idiot.*

Premiere’s back. From the crevice between her wings blood continued to flow freely.

— — There was another.

Most likely Shayna had let loose another arrow which had found its way into Premiere’s back.

— — *Why?*

— — *Why did she protect me?*

In an indirect way, I am one of your greatest foes.

“You’re making a weird face, you know? — —I get it. Listen up! I’ll teach you something good. It’s true, I won’t forgive the trash who try to kill my cretins

before killing me. I've decided that I will track down all the bastards who dared to kill my cretins and kill them myself. That's why, the ones who dared to lay a hand on my cretins, this Pure race trash, I'll kill them when I find them."

She continued,

"That said, at the end of the day, I'm not going to refuse someone because they are from Atem, or because they are one of the Pure race, I'm not like Atem and their exclusion of the Other races. I don't believe in their blind devotion. I don't have those sort of beliefs like the Atem Kingdom, I do what I....want to do. That's why——!"

She jolted as another arrow hit her,

"I will protect the cretins that I have chosen. I don't hate you for being from the Pure race, or for being a member of the Atem royal family, and I don't like you for being half-Other race. At this point, that stuff doesn't matter. ——Alice, I'll protect you because you're my cretin."

Another arrow struck,

"The ones who killed my previous cretins are my enemies. Not you. Isn't that fine? That cretin #50——Sare-something said it was fine, that we just needed to protect you. He didn't say we had to be the same.....race.....In other words, that....is....that——"

The words jumbled and failed her, but she conveyed most of it.

Despite it's abrupt end, for some reason Alice accepted her explanation.

Premiere is haughty, arrogant, and conceited. But because she is honest with herself and never lies, her self-esteem never wavers.

This is what Alice realized from living with her this past month.

Alice also immediately realized when the strength left Premiere's arms——and she cried out,

——Someone!

"——Ah! Please help!"



— *Why am I standing in a daze, just watching?* (Sare)

— *Why art I standing hither? Simply gazing in befuddlement?* (Touka)

— *What am I waiting here for?* (Gillius)



— *What are we confused about?*



As one, the group ran towards Premiere and Alice.

Sare considered Premiere's words, which he had also heard.

She had talked about their official stance, which the group had not yet completely embraced.

If everyone were to honestly consider any other stance from each individual point of view, there would likely be no way they could achieve perfect solidarity as a group.

Because they were all so different, their ideals, pride, and way of thinking were also different.

— *That's why I said it would be fine if we just protect her.*

They wouldn't have to worry about their differences.

Just protect her, because she needs us to protect her.

Even if they were all very different, in the end, protecting a girl who needs protecting is an ideal that they could all understand and support.

He had proposed and encouraged such an idea because it was so simple to understand.

— *Yet, even though I was the one who spoke those words, I easily forgot them.*

That angel, who is all smiles in a suspicious way, understood those words more than anyone else.

She didn't lose her way.

— *I respect that. Honestly.*

Since the noble queen has gotten injured protecting her cretin, they would have to confront the ones who had hurt her.

And since that queen had also saved the cretin who had offered herself to her enemies, they needed to be sure they got the chance to convey their respect.

Goodness! She would probably kill herself trying to create a country where no one was allowed to die.

In that case, we need to——

“——Hurry!! Protect them!!” (Sare)

They rushed forward, and clashed against that superior army, the [Second King’s Blade].

Alice’s cry for help would become the signal that started a war.



“Continue firing Shayna. The enemies are Other races. We live and die for the principles of the kingdom. By the order of our king————we must subjugate the Other races!” (Ekkehardt)

“I get it already. Even though your brain is all muscle could you refrain from ordering me around?” (Shayna)

“As long as you understand. I’ll head out as well.” (Ekkehardt)

Ekkehardt drew and held his large sword horizontally before him before rushing forwards, a line of soldiers following closely, as if he was pulling them along.

——But I’m faster.

Although the other races seem to have abandoned their uncertainty, the one who draws his sword without hesitation will strike first. This is what he truly believed.

Even so, the opponents are other races.

There were even winged races, and those whose race allowed them to move faster than others.

“But——there’s no way we’ll lose! We are the King’s Blade!!” (Ekkehardt)

Ekkehardt's shout echoed like a warcry to the two hundred soldiers following him, and they roared as they charged.

Ekkehardt cut off the uncertainty he felt at aiming for the life of a former member of the royal family.

And if she was not afraid of the approach of the other races, then he had no reason to hesitate.¹



Opposite them, from within the rushing group, Sare considered whether or not they'd be able to make it to Alice and Premiere's side in time.

Gillius stretched out his large, intimidating wings and took flight. Touka, without decreasing her speed, unsheathed a long, slender sword sheathed at her back and turned her body, which was slower but possessed even more physical strength than that of the Majin, towards her enemies.

Their charge was terrible, like a sudden squall. They put so much strength into each step that their shoes were buried in the earth. With terrific fervor they closed in on their opponents.

—*Please let us make it in time....!*

They had to arrive at Alice and Premiere's side before Ekkehardt, rushing with his large sword, got there. Sare was confident that he would arrive first.

He raised his head and observed the terrible scenery as it sped by.

—*As I thought, it's impossible to focus my eyes on anything while moving this quickly.*

Sare had considered using the eye of destruction, but the situation wouldn't allow for it.

But if their foes reached the girls before he did, Sare would have to act.

That's why, he had to get there first.

Since he was worried about Ekkehardt's approach, Sare observed the man's actions.

From within the chaos of the two forces rushing each other Sare saw him:

Ekkehardt had shifted his large sword to one hand and pulled something out from a pocket around his chest. He then pulled his arm back in order to throw it.

Due to the constant movement around him, Sare was unable to observe what the object was.

No matter how quickly I get there, if that object is thrown it could arrive even sooner. I could use the eye of destruction, but it's risky without knowing the whole situation.

Therefore,

“Dammit!”

While embracing his thoughts of protecting Alice, Sare threw himself between Ekkehardt and Premiere’s back.

Ekkehardt threw the object just as Sare arrived, and it pierced his right shoulder.

Since it sunk into his flesh, it was likely a bladed weapon of some sort.

But Sare had no time to actually observe what it was.

Ekkehardt had already reached Sare and stood before him,

“You, you’re in the way. — — Can’t be helped, I guess I’ll start with you.”

It had taken Sare every bit of concentration to get there in time to protect Alice and Premiere, he hadn’t had the chance to think ahead.

There wasn’t even any time to properly guard against Ekkehardt’s arrival— —

The blade of the large sword swung down mercilessly at Sare’s unguarded neck.

1. This particular sentence is odd, and I took some liberties. I might be wrong.
